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Dance

VOLUME XXII NUMBER 6

JUNE, 1948

RUDOLPH ORTHWINE

Editor and Publisher

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ON THE COVER

Opera ballet and concert dance of the rosy teens of the 20th century had a way of looking just like this. The exuberant trio pictured on the cover is from Myra Kinch's ballet "ENTRANCES AND EXITS" produced twice this Spring in New York under the sponsorship of Choreographers Workshop. The dancers are Rhoda Johannson, Dean Miller and Myra Kinch. The photograph by EARL LEAF.

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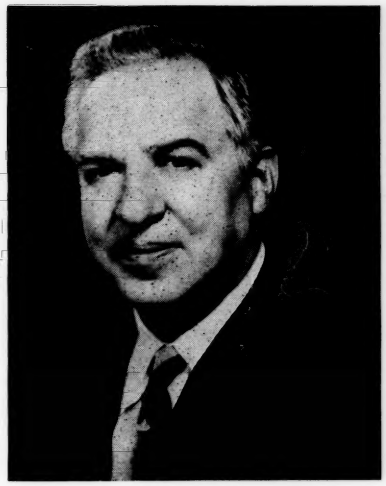
Character as Evolution



SOMETIMES, when I view a humanity which seems more bent on self-destruction every day my spirits sink low, but recollection of the change in so-called human nature cheers me. It is a fallacy to say that human nature never changes, because it does. Let me take you back in my recollection to my childhood at the turn of the century in Central Europe, where a fanatically harsh attitude toward the rearing of children was the accepted thing.

My school years at the turn of the century were marked by an authoritarianism at home and school which were unforgettably bitter, in the light of the attitude taken toward the rearing of our young today. I used to get out of bed in those days at 6:00 A.M. and work two hours before going off to school on a meagre breakfast. After school I went back to work and I can still remember that I never dined until 10:00, sometimes as late as 11:00 P.M., so that I usually ate and slept in one operation. Once, when I complained about the harshness of my lot, I was peremptorily told that I didn't know what hardship really was, that a previous generation had really had tough going.

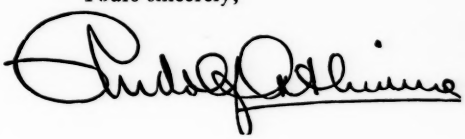
Think of it. Can you see your own eight year old child working an eight hour day, going to school for another six hours and sleeping a matter of six or seven hours a night?

Human nature *has* changed; character has changed. Some values have been rediscovered, sadly lacking in my childhood. Parents today, in the main, will stop at no sacrifice to attain a better life for their children.

Perhaps this change in character portends a future for man in spite of the greed, ignorance, hate and destruction of today. There may even be men around to see the year 2000 in if character will affect men so radically!

The great fight of the 20th century as I see it is the re-armament of character. We are everywhere confronted with power-drunk politicians and rulers of bad odour. Here at home some are busy trying to make us an authoritarian, policed state. Let us not fall into the trap. Fight against the policing of thought and ideas; resist reactionary legislation. Fight to bring out progressive ideas by practicing the morality and character which will create the true PEACE.

Yours sincerely,



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LETTERS to the Editor

Dear Sir:

I agree wholeheartedly with your editorial in the April issue of DANCE Magazine. If only your message would come to the attention of all our people.

Many congratulations on the excellence of your publication. The March issue was noteworthy.

Sincerely,
B. S. Feinberg, M. D.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

*

Dear Sir:

Our students have so enjoyed the articles on the history of ballet by **A. E. Twysden**, that I am writing to ask if there is any possibility of their appearing in book form. There is a great need for such a book for ballet students, and as far as I know, the only existing histories are not suitable for younger students and are also far too expensive.

Sincerely,
Lisa Gardner,
Washington, D. C.

*

Dear Sir:

As a subscriber to your magazine I must write and tell you what a pleasure it is to read the intelligent and well-written subject matter handled so ably and courageously by **Doris Hering.**

She is unusually sensitive to all the arts and displays a thorough knowledge of dance through her reports and criticisms in DANCE.

I have been attending concerts and reading about the dance for many years and I would certainly rank her with the finest of our contemporary writers on dance.

With best wishes and continued good luck to DANCE Magazine.

Sincerely yours,
Milton Epstein,
New York City

*

Dear Sir:

I am one of your devoted readers and a regular subscriber to your magazine since several years. I have just received three copies of DANCE and am reading them with a background of machine-gun fire and occasional explosions.

You cannot imagine what joy and pleasure these three latest copies have brought to me. My entire school is reading them greedily, one borrowing from the other in a chain.

Our peaceful "biblical" Jerusalem is now like something out of Wild West film. You may be interested to hear that my ballet studio continues working in spite of tension, shortages and actual danger for average citizens of the town.

Thanking you for the comfort and delight of reading your magazine which comes to besieged Jerusalem.

Yours sincerely,
Rina Nikova,
Jerusalem, Palestine

Rina Nikova of Jerusalem, seen here with group of dancers from her school in biblical ballet, writes DANCE MAGAZINE this month about the difficulties of teaching dance in the Holy Land today.

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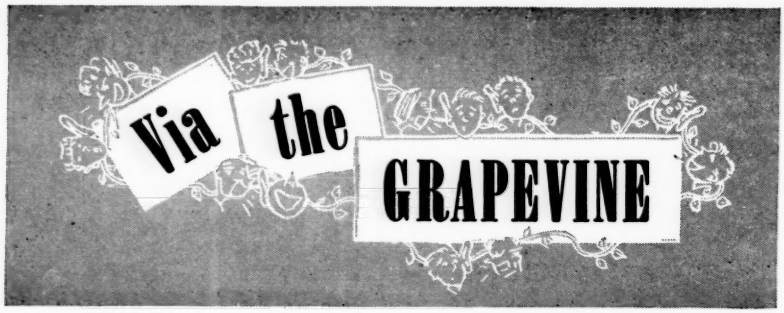

The grapevine says that in Hollywood **Bill Eythe** is producing an intimate English musical entitled *Lend An Ear*, with dances by **Gower Champion.** Most of **Tamiris'** work has been cut out of *Up In Central Park* and Universal is cutting its budget on dance directors. A trend? . . . **Ivan Kirov** danced the Devil in Ojai Valley production of *L'Historie du Soldat.* 17 year old **Joan Jacobs** stepped into the ballerina role of this ballet in the place of **Nora Kaye,** who had withdrawn . . . **James Mitchell,** erstwhile of *Brigadoon,* brought to the Coast for the '49ers, which has now been put back a year, is most unhappy about sitting around Hollywood doing nothing . . . **George White** is presenting a new *Scandals,* his first since his accident . . . **Jack Cole** is doing the dances for **Edwin Lester's** production of *Magdalena,* which goes to New York after a tryout in Hollywood . . . **Eleanor King** and **Merce Cunningham,** modern dancers, have appeard locally in recitals at U.C.L.A. . . . **Chuck Walters,** who did such a good job on *Good News* and *Easter Parade* will do *Annie Get Your Gun* next, starring Judy Garland . . . Big news on the Coast is the opening of the ambitious **Dance Theatre** by **Lester Horton.** (See DANCE Magazine for reviews, to appear in JULY issue) . . . **Nelson Barclift** is readying a concert for Fall appearance on the Coast and then to New York, after which he will go to England to appear in a *Serenade,* a Swedish musical . . . From San Francisco, we hear that **Jocelyn Volmar** is off to New York, where she will vacation by making the rounds on Broadway and study with **Edward Caton** . . . **Grover Whalen,** Chairman of Mayor O'Dwyer's Golden Jubilee Committee, has invited the **San Francisco Civic Ballet** to participate in the **International Dance Festival** to be held in New York this Fall. **George Washington Baker, Jr.,** president of the Civic group, has wired yes for the company . . . In Chicago **Dorothie Littlefield** has stepped in as director of the ice show at the Hotel Stevens Boulevard Room and **Maria Karnilova** is dancing the lead in the Chicago cast of High Button Shoes . . . **Carmen Amaya** is reported seriously ill in Spain . . . **Niki Sills Weber,** an industrious amateur editor and balletomane, is responsible for the very refreshing little paper put out by students of the **Swoboda-Yurieva School** in New York. It is called *Bars and Tights* and its executive office is listed as the **57th Street Automat.** And what's the matter with that? . . . **Patsy Bowman** and **Rudolf Kroeller** appear in a Chopin Ballet which accompanies the showing of *The Pirate* with **Gene Kelly** at the Music Hall during the month of June . . . **Iva Kitchell** is slated to appear with the New Orleans Symphony on June 22, 24 and 25, accompanied by special conductor **Richard Korn.** In July Miss Kitchell will appear at the Wheeling (West Va.) Outdoor Festival and in August will dance at Jacobs Pillow . . . **Deborah Bertonoff,** droll dancer and actress associated with the Habimah Players of Tel Aviv, appeared in recital locally on May 24th. Reviews next month . . . **Judith Martin** appeared in her first solo dance program on May 26th at the Ethnologic Dance Theatre. Reviews next month . . . **Allan Waine,** now appearing in *Brigadoon,* is the choreographer for the **Lemonade Opera** which gives a series of operas in New York commencing June 1. Mr. Waine has held weekly dance sessions for this co-op group throughout the winter and spring. The dance soloists who will appear in the company's premier of Prokofieff's farce opera, *The Duenna,* are **Ruth Sobotka** and **Davie Lerner** . . . **William Weslow** has stepped into the dancing lead in *Annie Get Your Gun* in New York . . . **Pearl Primus** has been commissioned by the Julius Rosenwald Fund to go to Africa to survey native dances. She will sail in September and travel into territories never before studied from point of view of dance.

*

Lucia Chase and **Oliver Smith,** executive directors of Ballet Theatre, are visiting England and France this summer. Mr. Smith sailed in May on the Queen Mary; will return in August. Miss Chase left on June 2nd on the America; will return late in June . . . **Ballet Theatre** is slated to open **its 9th annual tour** in **Boston** on **October 4th** and will appear in New York in **March, 1949, at the Metropolitan Opera House** . . . **Ballet Theatre Foundation** recently played host to its members on April 30 in the green room of the Met, where it held a reception for the principals of Ballet Theatre. On April 27, **Antony Tudor,** artistic director of B.T. and famous choreographer, lectured to members of the Foundation, accompanied by members of the B.T. in demonstration . . . The life of Bobbie Burns, the Scottish bard, is at last meat for a musical, which will be premiered in St. Louis by the Muny Opera and choreographed by whom other than, you guessed it: **Jamie Jamieson.** Mr. J. and **Sonia Woizikowsky** will dance the leading parts . . . **Dorothy Bird** and **James Starbuck** have the leading dance roles in *Sleepy Hollow,* based on the fabulous story of Ichabod Crane. **Anna Sokolow,** choreographer, has arranged suitably Dutch moods for this musical . . . **Nelle Fisher** and **Ray Harrison** appear every Wednesday night at 8:00 P.M. on NBC Television in a show called *America's Song* . . . **La Meri,** now in Mexico under the management of Teatro Americano, has appeared in four recitals at the Bellas Artes, described elsewhere in this issue by DANCE'S Mexico, D.F. correspondent . . . **Vernon Duke** and **George**

Please turn to Page 28

Group from the musical comedy "Hold It!" 'holding' it in a ballet which gives the hotfoot to Hollywood and western pictures. The choreography is the work of Michael Kidd.

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THE BALLET SOCIETY
New York City Center
April 28, 1948

The most fascinating demonstration of theatrical magic that any ballet stage has offered in years emerged this spring in the shape of *Orpheus,* whose world premiere was given by Ballet Society on the final program of its second subscription season.

Just twenty years ago, you will remember, **George Balanchine,** then a youth of only twenty-four, startled Paris with *Apollo* (originally entitled *Apollon Musagète),* to the music of **Stravinsky.** The first modern ballet in the Petipa tradition, it set a new standard for pure classic dancing in the Western World, which in recent times has culminated in a *Symphony in C (Palais de Cristal)* or *Theme and Variations.* Now, with *Orpheus,* Stravinsky and Balanchine have collaborated once more (and many times previously, of course), this time setting a new standard for classic *dramatic* dancing which makes the fuzzy outlines, the emotional hysterics, the blurred diffusion of movement of other modern ballet dramas seen outdated and almost tawdry.

Not to be confused with the American Ballet's Balanchine-Tchelitchew-Gluck affair of 1936, the new *Orpheus,* like *Apollo,* is concerned with the power of music and poetry. It has no involved psychological plot—nor any flashbacks, dreams, and other "modern" hocus-pocus—only a fair simple program re-enacting the legend of Orpheus, the son of Apollo and Calliope (the musical muse whom we have met in *Apollon),* whose singing lyre could charm both men and beasts, moving even the rocks and trees.

When the curtain rises, we see Orpheus alone, his lyre stilled in grief for Eurydice, his wife, who has died. Before him, then, a Dark Angel appears and shows him the power of his lyre. Together they set off for the underworld of Pluto to reclaim Eurydice. The scene dissolves, and after a pause we see weighed down by huge white rocks the Lost Souls of Greek mythology, while Bacchantes dance as if they cannot stop, with merciless dynamic force. Orpheus at last takes up his lyre and begins to play. The Lost Souls lay down their burdens, the Bacchantes stop dancing, Pluto suddenly enters and finds himself entranced. He listens to the musician's wordless pleading and grants permission to take his wife to Earth on one condition—that he refrain from looking back at her until they have gained the world above. Once again the scene dissolves, a white-silk curtain billowing down slowly as the lights black out, and we discover Orpheus leading Eurydice along the tortuous route in a slow-motion adagio, pulling her against gravity, lifting her across unimaginable dangers, both of them pressing through bottomless quicksands. Just as they catch their first glimpse of light, he can hold himself no longer. Tearing the mask from his eyes, he turns and beholds Eurydice, who at once falls lifeless at his feet. Quickly she is swallowed into the shades as he vainly clutches after her. Ordinarily, the legend would end right here, but unexpectedly we are shown another scene—Orpheus set upon by a swarm of Furies until he is annihilated. And finally, we see Apollo himself, leader of the muses, standing by the tomb of Orpheus as dawn begins to break. Pointing upward to Olympus, he ordains his son's apotheosis, and from the tomb there rises a twisted white branch, garlanded with flowers and symbolic of Eurydice. From it hangs the triumphant lyre.

Everything you have seen on stage has been astonishingly clear, yet suffused with a dignity, beauty, and nobility that are rarely represented without appearing silly, banal, or meretricious. Seldom has plastic pantomime been used so economically to such telling effect, and seldom has it been woven so closely into the fabric of the dancing by Mr. Balanchine. What you have seen is something more than the mere re-enactment of a story—who, indeed, has not known it since childhood? Rather you have seen a stunning visual spectacle, a magical illusion with enormous aesthetic attraction. More than that, you have seen a kind of tribute to a living ideal, a contemporary Orphic mystery, or as John Martin so perceptively put it—I must give him credit—"the reperforming of a ritual," the only possible approach if you analyze the problem, though the collaborators wisely decided to avoid any suggestion of Greek archeology.

Picture the epileptic fits, the floor-rolling anguish, the doubled-up poses of acute indigestion, the soulful or frenetic verbal hullaballoo such as "modernism" might have used. What is most sensational about *Orpheus,* however, is its cool, serene non-sensationality. Discarded are the all-too-familiar tactics of shock, to be replaced with subtle, restrained, and indirect emotion in spite of the choreography's simplicity. Its characters are all enchanted beings, figures from a myth that once had roots in reality,

who are acting out a well-remembered ceremonial which they have performed so many times over that the outer trappings of emotion have been sloughed off long ago, leaving the stylized, formal essence. The ballet thereby projects an historical act as well, the process through which the arts of dance and eventually drama first perhaps came into being in ancient times.

It is missing the bus by a mile to claim, as someone did, that *Orpheus* does not have much dancing simply because Balanchine has not supplied the *kind* and *quality* of dancing for which he is most noted. The key to his choreography lies in just that fact; it is brilliant for its understatement, for its extreme self-control combined with intense feeling under the circumstances to which it applies.

Precisely the same holds true for Stravinsky's score, which the composer considers "the culmination of his work in the theatre." Like the choreography, it is quiet, mystical, and implicitly—not explicitly—emotional. Extraordinary is the way it expresses deep feeling with the utmost restraint and simplicity, with none of the raucous stridency, say, of an Alban Berg. In a little over thirty minutes, it expresses more than Mahler or Schoenberg expressed in a lifetime. It is one more milestone in Stravinsky's career, in which he has brought to bear on thoroughly dramatic subject matter all that he has learned in composing the mostly abstract, neo-classic scores of the past three decades, employing, in addition, not the Romantic themes of Tschaikovsky (as in *Baiser de la Fée*), but more refined and graceful stuff. To use his own terms, you might say that he has applied Apollonian principles to Dionysian emotions to create for the first time a truly classic dramatic-ballet score.

Isamu Noguchi's exceptional designs I have left to last, chiefly because they are next to impossible to describe in brief. Sculptured neutral-colored shapes are set against plain backgrounds, while the costumes likewise are moderately surrealistic. His underworld decor has little of the old-fashioned fire and brimstone you might expect, but it is none the less exciting for that. Not the least of its virtues is **Jean Rosenthal's** lighting, which is something of a miracle all by itself.

Actually, though, it is wrong to speak of any element apart from the rest, for *Orpheus* is an unusually perfect amalgam of music, drama, dance, and design to which Ballet Society has accorded an unusually perfect production. On opening night **Stravinsky** himself conducted **Leon Barzin's** excellent orchestra, and the cast includes **Nicolas Magallanes** as Orpheus (strong on support but lethargic as ever in movement and gesture), **Francisco Moncion** as the Dark Angel, **Maria Tallchief** as Eurydice, **Edward Biglow** as Pluto, **Herbert Bliss** as Apollo, **Tanaquil LeClercq** as the leading Bacchante and **Beatrice Tompkins** as head of the Furies.

Considering *Orpheus* from the long-range view, I imagine that it will go down as a sort of landmark in the history of the lyric theatre. For one thing, it proves conclusively that Balanchine is not only the greatest pure-dance choreographer but the greatest dramatic choreographer now working in ballet. *Orpheus* marks a new style in handling dramatic themes, a classic treatment at heart, which can only spring from

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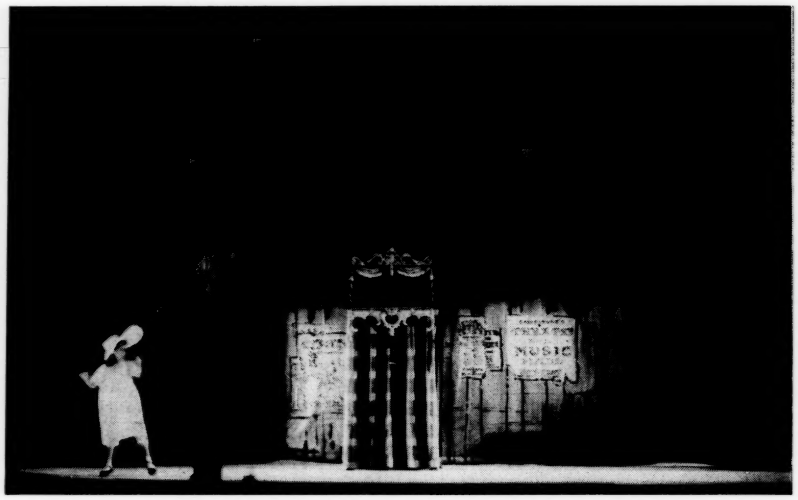
complete command of technique plus the highest artistic discrimination and sophistication—what Molière would have termed honnêteté—through which total expressiveness is achieved with total economy of means, absolute complexity with absolute simplicity. Make no mistake—*Orpheus* is no inspired accident. It has been deliberately constructed, worked on hard until none of the labor shows.

It also marks a new capacity for fantasy and a new capacity for reason and perspective. Not only does it reaffirm the classic doctrine for which Stravinsky and Balanchine have so long stood but it points toward the future, when the most significant new experiments will deal very largely with absorbing more fully the old, those of the first half of this century, into the body of tradition. We are passing, in other words, from revolution to evolution and consolidation in the arts. *Orpheus* is a spiritual and metaphysical work as well, one of the few in our time with genuine meaning. It does not conclude with someone's head bashed in, with its hero at the gallows, with its heroine about to hang herself. Yet without ever using the stage as a pulpit, without preach-



Stage settings of The Ballet Society production of "Punch and the Child" twice produced this Spring at the New York City Center. The decors of Horace Armistead. Above: 1st Act setting with the Child, danced by Judy Kursh, on stage, left. Below: 2nd setting reveals the House of Punch in a Goblin world reached by the Child upon her stealing through the curtained doors of the street theatre seen in photograph above.

ing jejunely that man—oh, frabjous joy!—is good, it extends a hopeful promise for times such as ours of darkness and trouble.

Why try, however, to articulate in words the meaning of *Orpheus*? Go to see it for yourself without fail when you can. I believe it is one of the capital works of our century.

To come down from the clouds, I should add that following the subscription program, Ballet Society gave a repertory season of four public performances, which also included *Punch and the Child, Synfonie Concertante in E Flat:K. 364, Symphony in C, Renard,* and *Elegie.* I have reviewed in previous issues all but the last two, both of which are minor pieces. *Renard,* of course, is Stravinsky's witty little opera-burlesque on the well-known children's fable, employing two tenors and two baritones whose enunciation in this case was so poor that I could only catch a word now and then. Esteban Francès designed the clever costumes and backdrop, Balanchine the agreeable choreography. Bolender was the Fox, Moncion the Rooster, Taras the Ram, and Bliss the Cat. *Elegie,* also by Stravinsky, was played from the stage by a viola soloist as two young ladies (Tanaquil LeClercq—or Dorothy Dushock—and Pat McBride) in blue practice costumes performed the classroom exercises provided by Balanchine.

For the sake of the record, I should also mention that in its second season the Ballet Society gave six full-scale new ballets, in contrast to the five such works (I am not counting two pas de deux) offered by the two major companies combined in the same period of time. Which is to say nothing whatever of the relative merits of the ballets in question. Incidentally, five of the grand total of eleven major new works for the 1947-48 season were done—you guessed it—by George Balanchine.

Reed Severin

*

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Marie Marchowsky has not perched placidly on the laurels she earned in her concert of just two seasons ago, but has forged ahead to develop a choreographic style interwoven with more than incidental flashes of maturity.

She manipulates her subject matter always with confidence, often with artistry. And the times when she does fall from artistic grace, it is not for lack of invention and originality, but from a persistent tendency to lapse from the emotionally valid to the visually intricate. She becomes so obsessed with her patterns and combinations that a chilly chasm forms between the seat of the movement and its outward manifestation. This occurred specifically in her two new major works.

In the first, *Antigone,* Miss Marchowsky literally stuck her neck out by invading a field where Martha Graham has already had so much to say. And so she left herself in a position to have her work compared step by step with Miss Graham's versions of the

please turn to page 41

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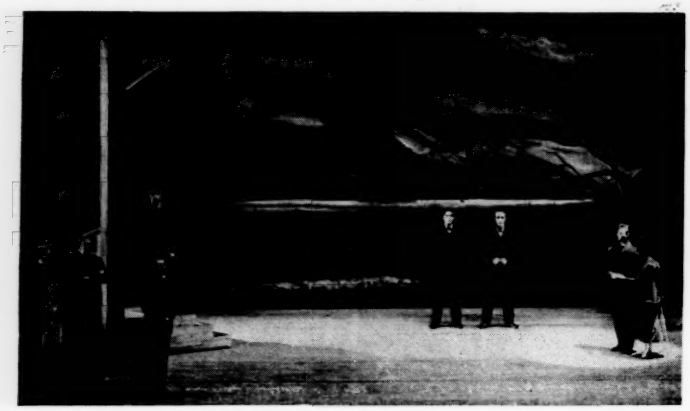


The Accused and her Pastor stand before the tribunal of justice in "Fall River Legend". To the right: John Kriza and Alicia Alonso.

The Season In Review

by REED SEVERIN

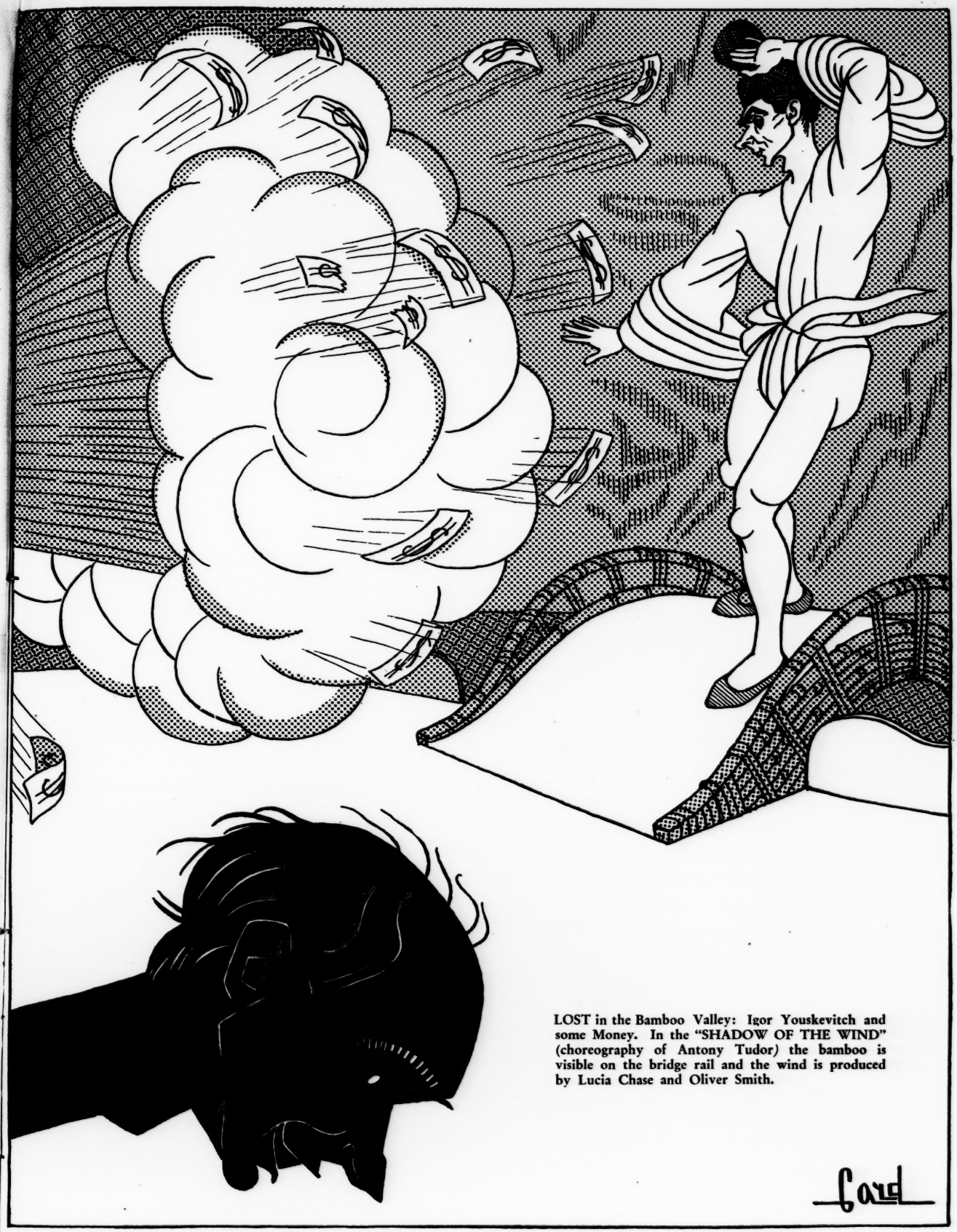
Diana Adams as the Mother of the Accused and Ruth Ann Koesun as The Accused (as a child) in "Fall River Legend".

BALLET THEATRE'S heart, if not always its head, is unquestionably in the right place. In its five-week season at the Met this spring, it showed the degree of enterprise that helps make the difference between an art that's alive and one half-dead — like opera. I could not always admire the final results, but I did admire the amount of energy expended in giving two world premieres and two revivals. I was pleased, too, to find the company displaying initiative in various smaller ways: Stravinsky, Copland, Balanchine, and Gould each conducting a work of his own with an orchestra that sounded like every ballet orchestra ought to sound; Eugene Loring guest-appearing in his *Billy the Kid*, which he also restaged; ambitious new decors, one really brilliant; the return of Nana Gollner to ease the burden thrown on Alonso by the four-week absence of pneumonia-stricken Nora Kaye; a *corps de ballet* improved over last year's, though still far from perfect in a *Princess Aurora* and worn to a frazzle by constant rehearsing; and, on a different level, the company's vigorous, enlightened public relations policy, which is steadily building good will for the troupe.

Of the season's novelties the best, I think, was *Billy the Kid*, with John Kriza in the title role, Zachary Solov as Alias, and Alicia Alonso as Mother and Sweetheart. In the years that have passed since it was first presented by Ballet Caravan (1938), it has become the prototype for the thousand and one Western ballets that have followed. That it should seem so fresh to us today (except for the dated symbolism) can probably be ascribed to this simple fact: Loring has treated the story of this almost legendary villain and hero of our Wild West as dance, not pantomime drama. The choreography has, in fact, some classical virtues. It shows a sense of form, its movement is exciting at the same time it's exciting, and the patterns are ingenious. The score by Aaron Copland remains no less untarnished with the passage of time. Not so Jared French's indifferent set, in place of which I'd almost prefer the old device of bare brick walls plus clever lighting.

Watching Balanchines *Apollo* directly after *Billy* brought home again how much that is fundamental Mr. Loring owes to Mr. Balanchine, his former teacher. It is not a debt of brazen imitation, empty of originality (such as several owe to Mr. Loring); it is a perfectly proper sort of debt such as Balanchine owes in turn to Petipa, to a continuing tradition that is endlessly adapted and expanded, not junked in the manner recommeded by a letter in April's DANCE Magazine.

Less praiseworthy were Agnes De Mille's frequent references (which got me dizzy) to Balanchine, Graham, and most particularly Antony Tudor, to say nothing of her own previous work, in *Fall River Legend*, the newest entry in the horror sweepstakes. It was originally suggested—though certain facts *(Please turn to page 42)*



LOST in the Bamboo Valley: Igor Youskevitch and some Money. In the "SHADOW OF THE WIND" (choreography of Antony Tudor) the bamboo is visible on the bridge rail and the wind is produced by Lucia Chase and Oliver Smith.

Card

"Fables Of Our Times", a ballet by Charles Weidman patterned after the James Thurber tales of the same name has been the new work staged by Mr. Weidman this year. The Fables were produced on a Guggenheim award. In the episode picture above, the animals of field and forest, awed by the Owl of the fable, "The Owl Who Was God," regard him with trepidation, as the plump creature in front shrieks, "He's GOD!"

THE SEASON IN REVIEW

by DORIS HERING

SEEING Charles Weidman and his group in a full series of concerts, instead of the usual one-performance tidbit, gave us a welcome opportunity to evaluate the unique brand of theatre dance that Mr. Weidman has evolved over the years.

The pigeon-hole title of his approach is "kinetic pantomime", which means pantomime expanded to dance proportions, or more simply, narrative dancing. Although pantomime is far from new in conjunction with dance, Mr. Weidman has created such a successful amalgam of the two that one is never conscious of the uncomfortable feeling of hiatus that often occurs, for example, in ballet, where pantomime and pure dance interrupt each other and where the pantomime is highly conventionalized and used merely to get over a point that the dance is unable to make.

Mr. Weidman's pantomime form is entirely natural

Fred Fehl

Charles Weidman and Felicia Conde struck in a heap (by Love) in Weidman's "And Daddy Was a Fireman".

and free of device. It is usually rather delicate and subtle, though never to the point of obscurity. And it comes within the framework of dance because it is patterned and rhythmical. Unlike theatrical pantomime, one movement may be repeated a few times and even expanded into another movement with genuine dance phrasing.

The most typical and in many ways finest example of Mr. Weidman's personal style is the suite of six solo portraits, "On My Mother's Side". This is by no means a new work in the repertoire, belonging as it does to the Americana-family portrait phase of a few years back. Yet it remains untarnished and shows Mr. Weidman at his most sure, unhampered by the group problems that often set him adrift in works of larger dimension.

With finesse, humor, and infinite kindness, he creates deft pictures of his mother's family. There is amusing coyness in "Aunt Jessie", who danced on her little toes. There is tenderness and sensitivity in blind "Grandmother Hoffman". There is drama in the dilemma of "Grandfather Hoffman," who hanged himself. They are not pondrous studies or psycho-analytical character

Charles Weidman as the Owl in the Thurber Fables episode "The Owl Who Was God", leading the other animals to their destruction over the brink of a cliff.

Fred Fehl

Fred Fehl

Charles Weidman and Betty Osgood as a couple of Chipmunks in the Thurber Fable "The Shrike and the Chipmunks". Mr. Chipmunk is arranging nuts in artistic patterns; Mrs. C. is cleaning her house violently.

CHARLES WEIDMAN

and his

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Impressions by RAY WISNIEWSKI of the fabulous creatures: (a) from Unicorn in the Garden; (b) from The Courtship of Arthur and Al; (c) from The Shrike and the Chipmunks.

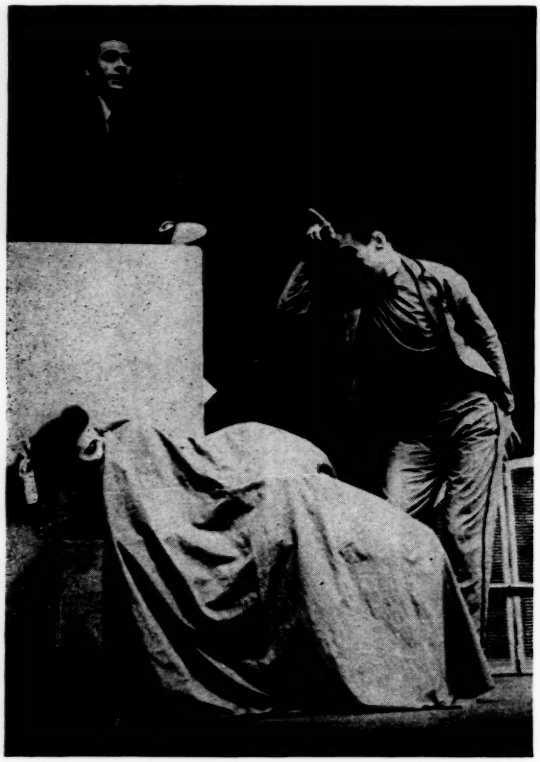
THE SEASON IN REVIEW ***continued***

delineations, yet the old grandmother with her constantly working fingers or the great-grandfather with his land greed are real people presented with the simplicity of a line drawing gently suffused with color.

When he tackles group works like the Abraham Lincoln legend, "A House Divided", Mr. Weidman sometimes has difficulty in the pure dance sections. They lack variety and impact. But just as the action begins to lag a bit, Mr. Weidman, with his keen intuition, picks up the loose ends and ties them with one of his own expressive solos, or a sharp study in small dimension like the rape scene which Saida Gerrard has made so poignantly her own.

Even "And Daddy Was a Fireman", with all the cuts it has received, still sags in the group sections—especially in the Lindell Hotel fire episode that immediately precedes the Fire and Victim duet.

Fred Fehl



Left: Narrator Jack Ferris overlooks the antics of the Man and his Wife in the fable "Unicorn in the Garden". Charles Weidman as the Husband rushes upstairs to tell his sleeping wife that there is a Unicorn in their garden.

Only in "Lynchtown" does Mr. Weidman's group choreography have a character of its own, and it is difficult to say just how much is due to the actual movements and how much to staging and accompaniment—so well are the component parts combined. "Lynchtown" is dramatically lighted with weird twiggy shadows flashing on a backstage wall so that when the figures enter from the right dragging a lynched corpse, their shadows loom elongated and macabre on the wall. Lehman Engel's score, with its insistent percussion and dry fife tune, add to the charged atmosphere.

And Beatrice Seckler's solo part plays a wild counterpoint to the sustained, almost drugged pulse of the group. She danced it magnificently with a fierce malevolence and a seething hysteria like a scream in a corridor echoing with footsteps and drumbeats. Her solo dancing shone all the more brilliantly because the remainder of the group was too soft in its attack. They lacked the sharpness, speed, and tension that make group movement in the modern idiom hang together. Miss Seckler moved so cleanly and surely that she made them seem like a bevy of well meaning grannies. For example, in the large circular pattern near the end, the other dancers merely lifted their legs to the side and contracted them inward toward *(Please turn to page 44)*

CHARLES WIEDMAN

Dancer for America

by DORIS HERING

WHEN he set out on his annual transcontinental tour this season, Charles Weidman carried with him a rich and varied portrait of America—to present to the people of America . . . the people in large towns, small towns, high school auditoriums, and concert halls. They welcomed him as a dancer who speaks to them in a language they understand completely and respond to warmly. "And that," says Mr. Weidman, "could be called my credo. I have no desire to mystify my audiences—to send them home with a glazed look in their eyes. I try to be completely clear and choose themes that are drawn from the fabric of America. I like to use pantomime and the spoken word because they are easy to understand."

But when Mr. Weidman speaks of pantomime, he doesn't mean the kind of story-telling gesture we all associate with the old-time movie (although he admits that the old comedies, and particularly Charlie Chaplin, have been a source of inspiration for him). He is talking of a way of moving that is uniquely his own and that has made him a leading comic dancer of the present day. He calls it "kinetic pantomime" and says that it differs from ordinary pantomime because it is not representational. It does away with the episodic type of story-telling. Stress is put on the movement value of a gesture and on the contrasting of idea themes.

Of course, all this sounds very technical. But what it really means is that Mr. Weidman can, with a twist of his long, slender wrists, or the stooped carriage of his lanky frame, or the puffing of his cheeks, portray a blind old lady sewing, or Lincoln beset by the Civil War, or a stupid old owl—all on the same program—and all with an unfailing sense of characterization.

Unlike many performers, Mr. Weidman does not look upon his out-of-town audiences as unsophisticated—not even when a woman in Seattle comes backstage because she thinks that Martha Graham is in the group—or a couple in a mid-western city thinks that Mr. Weidman's troupe is the Salzburg Opera Company. Perhaps it's because he, too, was once a member of that audience. As a boy of fourteen in Lincoln, Nebraska, the only dancing that he knew was ballroom dancing, which he performed with his sister. At that time he was planning to become an architect or a historian. Then he saw Ruth St. Denis in a concert, and his love for architecture, and history, and movement suddenly fused into a magnificent whole that was infinitely more beautiful and more wonderful than any one of its parts. And so a budding architect became America's Leading Male Dancer . . . but not until he had spent ten years with Denishawn and several more collaborating with Doris Humphrey on their own conception of dance theatre.

Now, despite thirty years of serving the most tyrannical of all the arts, Mr. Weidman remains essentially simple, almost naif, in his outlook. There is none of the slickness or the willfulness of the usual seasoned performer in his bearing. He still has the gentle humility of one who has much to learn and who satirizes keenly but never unkindly. Perhaps that is why his students, his troupe, and his audiences look upon him with so much affection.

And that's another thing about Charles Weidman—his audiences. Most concert dancers have their own very special followings who pursue their careers and their concerts with blind and unfailing devotion. But Mr. Weidman has no special following—no special little clique. He appeals to all people everywhere who like humor and a healthy, uncomplicated approach to the dance.

He presents themes that are very close to the experience of most of us. For instance, this year's repertoire consists of his two serious pieces of Americana, the Lincoln study, . . . *A House Divided,* and *Lynch Town;* two older pieces, *Ringside* and *Dialogue;* the delightful Thurber piece, *Fables for our Time* (premiered last summer at Jacob's Pillow); and three works which Mr. Weidman conceived as a tribute to his parents, *On My Mother's Side, And Daddy Was a Fireman,* and the brand-new *Panamic Suite.*

When we asked Mr. Weidman about the source of inspiration for his Panamic Suite, his answer was typical of the practical considerations that sometimes motivate an artist's creative process. "We needed a lively, dancy number to open the program," he said, "and so I figured that it might be a good idea to compose a sequel to *And Daddy Was a Fireman.*

The latter is a nostalgic period-piece of the courtship of his parents in Lincoln, Nebraska, at the turn of the century. At the end of this work, Daddy leaves to become Firechief in the Canal Zone. A year later he sends for his little family. And *Panamic Suite* is Panama as seen through the eyes of Sonny, age 7 (Mr. Weidman). What he sees is a colorful picture of the daily life of the people, their work, their squabbles, their festivals—set into five typical dance forms.

Mr. Weidman took these numbers on tour with his newly organized company and brought them to Broadway in the spring.

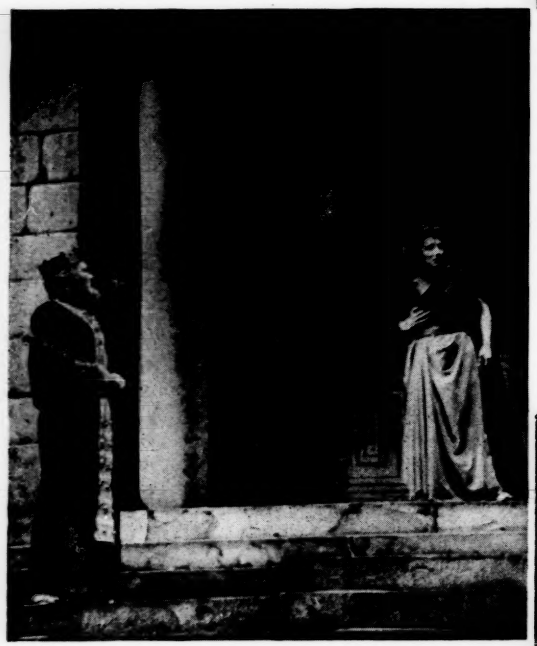
After that will come a brief period of planning for a new and exciting phase in a career that is decorated with corner stones like touring the Orient in 1925 with the Denishawn Company, dancing with leading symphony orchestras all over the country, choreographing Broadway hits like *As Thousands Cheer, I'd Rather Be Right,* and *Sing Out, Sweet Land;* and founding with Doris Humphrey a dance repertory theatre of their own, the Humphrey-Weidman Studio Theatre. Mr. Weidman is planning to make his summer farm at Blairstown, New York, into a Summer School of the Dance. Of course, at the present time, the plans are still in the "wouldn't it be nice" stage, but he feels that the farm, which has been his summer hideaway for *(Please turn to page 28)*

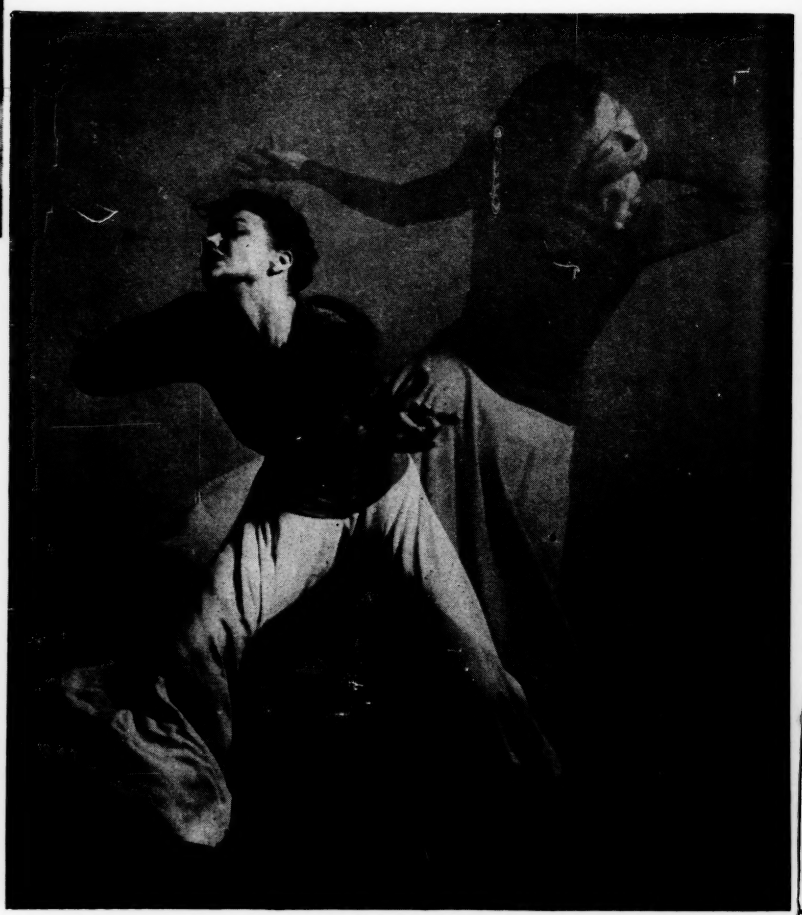
Reflections on the use

The Author of these reflections, Miss Gertrude Lippincott

How successful *can* the marriage of modern dance and ballet technique be?

GERTRUDE LIPPINCOTT thinks NOT!





Three variations of a single theme. Three techniques: the same emotion. In the three accompanying photographs, exponents of the modern dance, the ballet and the spoken word accompanied by mime project the same emotion or mood, in all three examples, that of despair or grief. These pictures demonstrate the similarities in projection of mood which rise above technique and the difference in projection created by the technique itself. (a) Miss Judith Anderson, actress, portraying the gigantic role of Medea, stands in the doorway of her home in Corinth, her body writhing with the despair and grief she reveals to her royal visitor; (b) Valerie Bettis, modern dancer, in her own composition, The Desperate Heart, projects the same quality in movement peculiar to her own particular idiom; (c) Hugh Laing, as the dying Romeo in the Tudor ballet, Romeo and Juliet, conveys his despair at his premature suicide, before Juliet, unaware of his approaching death, rejoices at her own return to life, in gesture and movement recognizable as peculiarly belonging to ballet. . . . . The same theme: three variations.

of the middle body

RECENTLY I attended an exciting program given by a company of Spanish dancers. The speed and brilliance with which they performed was almost incredible. Their technic was superb. What interested me especially, however, was the inclusion of three dances which attempted to combine traditional Spanish dance with modern dance. The results were interesting to observe, although I feel that they were not entirely successful.

I have oftentime discussed the possibility of combining the technics of classical ballet and modern dance with numerous professional dancers and educators. The experimental Spanish dances which I saw brought this discussion to my mind and set me to thinking about the advisability of using certain aspects of expressional dance within the framework of a virtuoso technic.

I believe that a virtuoso dance technic, whether it be Spanish, ballet, tap, or exhibition ballroom does not readily lend itself to a combination with the expressional medium. On the one hand, the virtuoso technic is mainly concerned with an extraordinary development of the muscles of the extremities — legs, arms, hands, head, and feet. On the other hand, the expressional technic is concerned with a development of the muscles of the middle body. The middle body can be used to evoke all the emotions which the dancer or the choreographer desires to express.

But in order to support the above statements, I believe it is necessary to inquire into some of the aesthetic backgrounds of dance. Do you recall the chapter in John Martin's book, INTRODUCTION TO THE DANCE, which deals with the various efforts to combine the best features of ballet and modern dance? I have just re-read it and find it very enlightening in view of the experimental combination of Spanish and modern dance which I saw. Mr. Martin, you will remember, brings out the fact that some dancers, choreographers, and aestheticians have felt that by combining the best features of modern dance and ballet they could discard the bad features of both. Ballet dance, they argue, has given too much attention to virtuosity and to personal achievement, and has neglected expressiveness. Modern dance, on the other hand, has neglected personal glamour and has tended to become somewhat drab and unattractive. Therefore, if you combine the glamour of the ballet with expressiveness of modern dance, you will have a perfect dance form.

The facts of the matter are, as you know, not as simple as they appear on paper. When you try to combine two forms of dance which are as contrary in purpose as ballet and modern dance, you only succeed in canceling out both of them. Mr. Martin says it much better than I can in his INTRODUCTION TO THE DANCE; "The basis of the expressional dance, for example, is the materializing of inner experience in terms of freely created movement; the basis of the ballet is a definite and traditional scheme of movements, subject to great alteration and adaptation, it is true, but inviolable in the fixity of its principle. To attempt to put a fixed procedure or a ready-made vocabulary upon the former

is simply to deny its existence, and to take away the established code from the latter is to deprive it of its center of reference and the foundation of its effectiveness. If there is a point midway between the two approaches at which movement can be half traditional and half produced by immediate subjective processes, it has not yet been discovered."

The whole point of the discussion, it seems to me, is based on the important differences in the respective purposes of the two types of dance. Ballet is a tradition. As a technic, it has been built up over centuries. It is a classical art form. It is not a romantic form. It is not concerned either with the expression of human emotion or with an imitation of nature. Its essential medium is an academic code of abstract movement which presents the human body in its most ideal form. Thus its technic is far removed from the human body's movements in natural life. Rather than exploring the possibilities of human movement on a natural basis, it adapts those movements to its own specialized and codifies system.

Modern dance, expressional dance, or whatever you wish to call it, does not base its technic on an academic tradition. Rather it does seek to communicate emotional states and experiences which can not be intellectual or rational means. These emotional states are communicated directly in terms of movement.

If balletomanes and supporters of modern dance thoroughly understood the differences in purpose between ballet and modern dance, they would not engage in endless and tiresome arguments as to which of the two is better. Of course, you may say to me, "I agree with you on theoretical grounds, but I still prefer ballet to modern dance, or vice-versa." I will answer that you have a perfect right to like ballet, or modern dance for that matter. However, it is well to understand that the two forms of dance are not competing. Rather they complement one another.

Isadora Duncan, who was the first modern dancer (although she would probably deny the fact vehemently), was very much disturbed about the classical ballet's distortion of natural movement. About thirty years ago, she said that "all movements of our modern ballet are sterile movements because they are so unnatural." Isadora was a revolutionary and an innovator. She stated her case without much restraint and said flatly that the ballet of her time produced an "artificial, mechanical movement not worthy of the soul." She believed that technic was a means and not an end. In her approach to dance there could be no such thing as a vocabulary of movement. What Isadora did not comprehend was that for ballet the technic is both the end and the means, or as Mr. Martin puts it, "its substance is its technical material".

Isadora was a great romanticist. In addition she was definitely American in her resistance to authority as such. As La Meri points out in her book, DANCE AS ART FORM, the "desire for freedom from tradition (in the arts) attacks, first of all, the traditional forms of technic." Thus Isadora discarded ballet technic as completely unsuitable for her purposes. She spent her life searching for a way to express the emotional experiences she desired to communicate.

And all modern dancers from Isadora's time to the present are doing just what she did. They are trying to train their bodies to a point where their physical instruments will respond to any and all demands made upon them by their emotions. Of course, present-day dancers have the experiences of other modern dancers upon which to lean. But the fact to keep in mind, it seems to me, is that the training of the body should be based on a technic which does not develop into a set vocabulary. Occasionally modern dancers forget this fact, and you see stereotyped technics appearing again and again in a dancer's repertoire. Nothing could be further removed from the purpose of modern dance. There are no rules. There are no guarantees of success.

As you read this, you will probably say to yourself, "All right, but how do you expect me and the readers to be able to have a standard by which to judge all the various personal expressions of emotions which I see? In ballet, I understand the vocabulary, and I have something on which to base my judgment. But in modern dance, I have no immediate standard. How do I know whether what I see is good or bad?"

I would reply in the following manner: "You have to turn to the underlying purpose in order to understand that the individuality of the performer or the choreographer is the very essence and spirit of modern dance. The practical aspect of choreography is not based on a technic, but on communication; and although this fact makes judgment more difficult in modern dance than in ballet, a standard for criticism does exist. You, as the spectator, can ask if the dance accomplishes its purpose, if it is successful within its limitations, if it communicates the attitudes and emotions it seeks to express; in doing so, does it delight? On the answers to these and still more specific questions, you base your judgment."

Turning to the specific question of the relative merits of the technic of ballet and the technic of modern

Louis Melancon

The author, Miss Gertrude Lippincott, in one of her own compositions entitled Dance of Dedication.

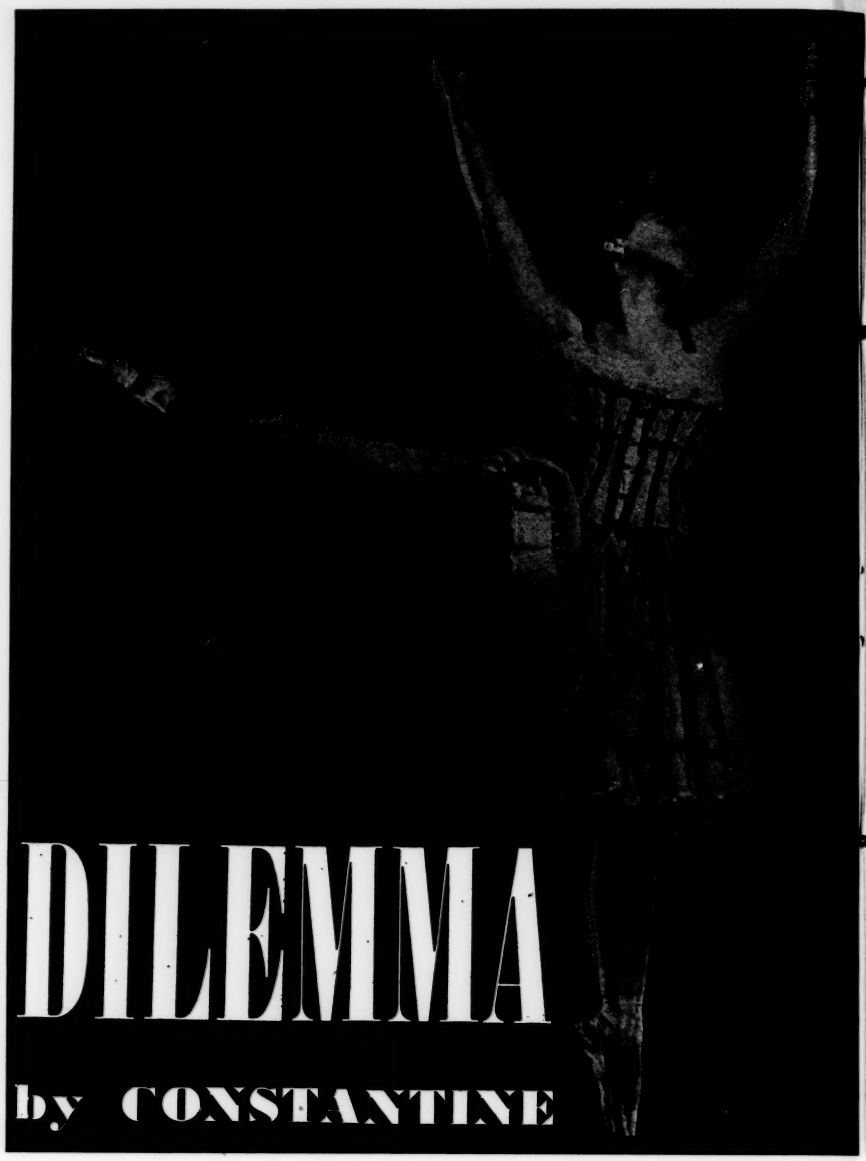
Robert Sosenko

A counterpoint pattern successfully attained by Iris Mabry in her first group work, Counterpoint, created for the Choreographers' Workshop. In this piece, as suggested by its title, there is a striving for contrast by means of techniques, the men used as exponents of one type of movement, the women of another. Whether a marriage of these techniques can be compatible is a point debated by the author in her article herewith.

dance, I find that John Martin believes the following: "Nothing could be more absurd, therefore, than the notion frequently that the ballet technic is the groundwork of all dance, that it is, in fact, the only technic. Actually it is the technic of the ballet and of nothing else." Mr. Martin goes on to make a very cogent point when he states that "The habit, which the ballet dancer acquires only by diligent practice of making adjustments in his body so that certain specific relationships are always maintained, thoroughly disqualifies him for that constant discovery of new relationships in the body, which is the very basis of the expressional dancer's technic." Another point to be stressed in this connection is that ballet technic uses and produces a completely centered body, whereas modern dance uses an uncentered body, or at least a body which is uncentered much of the time.

As I mentioned before in this letter, modern dance is concerned with the development of the muscles of the torso, the middle body. The torso is used to evoke fundamental emotions. It can be highly effective, but it does not have the surface brilliance of the arms, legs, hands, feet and head. In this connection, I was interested to note that Judith Anderson, in a recent performance of "Medea" rarely made any small movements. Her main motor activity, as well as her emotional drive, was centered in large movements of her body. In one of the most effective scenes of the play, she stood on top of the stairs leading into the house, and with her feet planted in a wide stance, she rolled her torso in large, circular movements. In these movements, she was the embodiment of a woman filled with grief and hatred.

For my part, I believe modern dance can develop, and is developing, a technical training (as distinguished from a technic) which will produce the speed, the brilliance, the strength, and the precision found in ballet. These qualities will not be developed in the same way as in ballet, but they will serve to meet the requirements of the modern dancer. Technical training should leave the dancer free to develop his own personal style and to extend its range dynamically, rhythmically, spatially, and emotionally. This style *(Please turn to page 42)*



DILEMMA

by CONSTANTINE

Photo by Constantine

CARMELITA MARACCI strikes an astounding developee in a classic period dance.

THE SCENE of this inquisition is the Hollywood studio of that artistic phenomenon. Carmelita Maracci, acclaimed by the average man in the audience and by the *au courant* as a wonder in the three fields of dance, modern, ballet and Spanish. Miss Maracci's gifts have worked to achieve a sort of hybrid perfection in the marriage of techniques. This amazing technique and its projection have been denied American audiences for more than a year.

"You ask why I didn't tour again after a successful appearance at Carnegie Hall?" asked Carmelita. "That's not so unusual. Many concert artists tour for one season and go on tour forevermore, or they might never see the sight of the road again!

"My isolation in the field is not self-willed, nor is my temperament so unique that after years of discipline and preparation for touring I would suddenly withdraw while a renumerative engagement was in progress. Only artists who are financially independent can afford the luxury of temperament!"

Sol Hurok had engaged Miss Maracci to fill the dates left vacant by Argentinita's untimely death a couple of seasons ago. Cancellations came in fast and thick and Miss Maracci did her best to see the remaining engagements through where theatre managers were not loathe to accept the substitute booking.

"The hotcha, bloomer and brassiere school of dancing is what many theatre managers would have preferred on that tour," said Miss Maracci. "I wear the brassiere and the bloomers but I add a costume and a pair of castanets to the above items and try to dance a people whose dignity and sorrows are far more important than a 'souse of the border' conception of Spain. That apparently makes a difference!" While on this tour, an engagement in a St. Paul, Minnesota arena developed into an unfortunate incident for audience and participants both. As a prelude to the performance, a band blared Sousa and "the Lady in Red". Hardly appropriate "mood music" for what was to follow. In lieu of a stage there was a cement platform, flanked by funeral potted palms. The dancers were seperated from the audience by a wet canvas curtain and it was cold because of the previous night's ice hockey bill. Some 14,000 spectators sat on removable squeaky chairs and silence was impossible unless each member of the audience held its breath. "Of course one can't expect the audience to suffer", declared Miss Maracci, "but *we* are not only expected to hold our breaths but to thank God for control over cold and for our strong kidneys. I carry no involved lighting plots and use minimum costuming. One might desire Karinska costumes but Sousa's Marches, damp cold, no dressing or ladies' room do not enhance a performance of this nature in any manner!" The first part of the program went fairly well, then came the

Why CARMELITA MARACCI Cancelled a recent tour

The episode related here is not ONE Dancer's dilemma: it affects every active concert dancer, soloist or group . . . .

dance based on Goya's war drawings. Three young ladies in sombre costumes assumed their positions on the platform. One of the dancers was named Peggy Kilroy. Some wiseacre blurted "Kilroy Is Here!" There were giggles. The giggles turned into laughter. As the dance progressed, the laughter developd into howls. Indignant with rage, Miss Maracci stormed onto the stage and demanded an end to the proceedings. She felt ashamed for those who could find anything funny in the tragedy of war and its effect on the suffering Spanish people, and ran with sorrow and humiliation to the dressing room on the opposite side of the sports events arena.

"I spoke to friends of the crowd, of the gladitorial lust of the living," said Miss Maracci "and I was answered by a voice from behind a partition: "I didn't want you anyway and I'll see to it that you never dance again!" The managers **CAN** threaten and accomplish this in a way, but I **AM** dancing even if I'm not touring at the moment."

Miss Maracci wanted to fulfill her commitments in New York last season. What prevented her from doing so was the lack of railroad fare, not an unusual predicament for a concert dancer. The St. Paul 'disaster' prevented further appearances since her manager's organization decided that she was too spirited and possessed faults in greater excess than her ability to dance.

"Very few dancers love touring," continued Miss Maracci, "even if they specialize in Nutcracker assininities. One might say that I was booked on this tour *on suspicion.* The suspicion arising from the fact that I was sold as a substitute attraction to questioning theatre managers. There is little demand for the non-entertainment school of dancing. The managers are always kind in their release. Either you are told that you must omit a season (possibly as a boon to audiences) or a St. Paul incident causes your tour to be cancelled.

"Now the question arises—what would I have proven if I hadn't stopped the performance? That the young ladies and I could take it, that we were truly democratic? Nonsense! If we had gone on with the performance, this unfortunate episode could not have been used as a reason to drop my option."

She could have added (but didn't) that an artist must stand ready to cast pearls before the swine but that he (or she) need not stand by and permit the swine to remain ignorant of their exact relation to the artist, not forever, by any means.

Since the wretched St. Paul episode has been the golgotha of many a fine artist who makes a livelihood by taking the beautiful to the dark corners of the world, it is time this kind of audiences was hauled over the retributive coals it so richly deserves. The guilt, naturally, does not belong to the fair town of St. Paul. It belongs to a state of mind which can exist anywhere, and in St. Paul itself there are, without doubt, those who have deeply felt the communal guilt and shame of such an episode.

In spite of the paucity of understanding audiences, and the low level of management, there will be a Maracci tour in 1948—with Kilroy!

"I am planning to dance late this year in New York in conjunction with my appearances in and around New York City. Not only will I have an Eastern tour, but there is a possibility, also, of a European tour.

Her new works to be exhibited will include *Retablo,* a Mexican suite composed by Gilberto Ysais, a classic Spanish dance, in the memory of La Passionaria, the revolutionary leader who fell during the Spanish war, two movements of the opus 31, no. 2, a sonata of Beethoven, a suite of dances to the music of Scarlatti, and a *Tango* by Stravinsky.

"All this on the least possible money," she concluded. As is the custom among touring concert dancers.

Carmelita Maracci and two members of her group, Julia Randall and Peggy Kilroy in a new ballet, "LIFE IN THE RAW ESPANA", to be presented in her forthcoming concert series.

Lansing Brown

IS NOTHING SACRED?

by ALBERTINA VITAK

"Poison Iva" they call her a study of dance-satirist Iva Kitchell

Triple-threat Kitchell in "Sonatina", where she tears the Romantic ballet limb from limb.

PERHAPS the most fascinating aspect of Iva Kitchell's satirical treatment of dance is the fact that she can dance it straight with the best of them. One need only see the genuine lyrical quality in her "Growing Up" piece, for instance, to realize this. She has a strong technique and an excellent background of training, not usually found in comedy dancing. Yet—she works in what may be likened to distortion of the art she loves. ALL dancers must love to dance or few would wilfully continue to practice this particular form of masochism—the more it hurts, in fact, the better they like it.

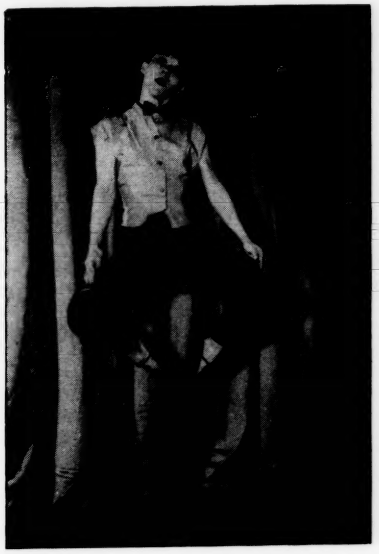
But it is not really news that Iva Kitchell can dance seriously with equal conviction. It is this very skill which is the key to her success. Her best effects are obtained chiefly by verging upon reality, with the slightest bit of overstatement or understatement where needed—the pixy glance which is almost a Kitchell trademark—instead of through hokum or comedy falls.

What drives a dancer like Iva Kitchell into holding up the mirror to the absurdities in dance? It may be quite simply the law of supply and demand, of course, because audiences everywhere, including dance audiences, like to laugh. But we find it is not even a question of choice. She is what we like to call a "natural". She has always been, and still is, curiously conscious of the grotesque, the silly, the absurd things taken for granted by other dancers, and quite seriously expressed by them.

At the early age of four she began to take dance over the coals when she mimicked her dancing master and schoolmates back in Junction City, Kansas, where she was born. She was always acting out impersonations with a keen sense of the ridiculous in human behaviour.

For all her ability to laugh at life and human behavior, Miss Kitchell's own life and career have not been the conventional bed of roses. She came up the hard way; even to the extent of starting as an orphan. She was sent to dancing class primarily to improve her health, and she stands today a monument to the efficacy of dance as medicine, a sturdy, even rugged hunk of health, if we ever saw any.

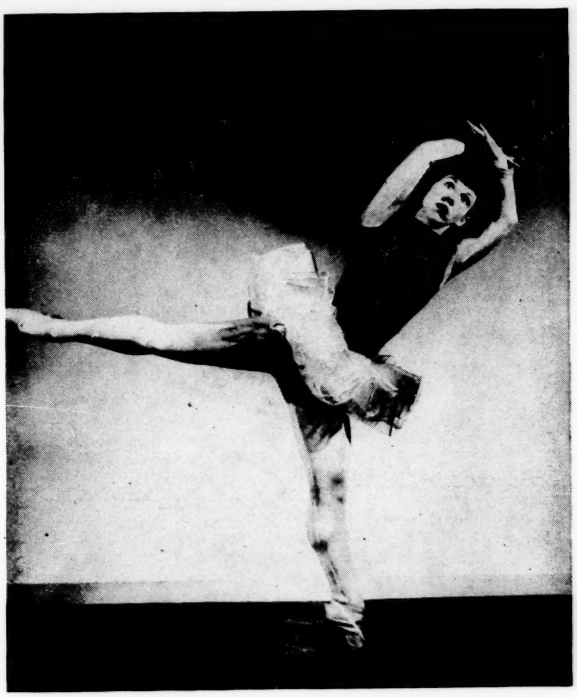
But it was a call, and not health, which lured her into serious study. She studied with some of the foremost ballet teachers in America, and spent several



The Vert brothers, Intro and Extro: a study in behaviour.

seasons with a small touring Russian company, and some seasons with the Chicago Opera Company before she decided for herself that her forte lay in another direction. Ballet alone did not satisfy her. Her repertory today includes not only satires of dancers and dancing, but of me and you as we look to Iva Kitchell, our foolish and lovable characteristics, caustically, but lovingly treated by a mistress in the art of characterization through movement, as well as through mime.

Offstage, Miss Kitchell's *(Please turn to page 28)*



"The Hunter and the Hunted", a choreosaga by Iva Kitchell. In this throbbing drama and chase, in which all parts are played by Miss Kitchell, the Hunter, right, finally bags his bird, left.

Is nothing sacred?

continued from page 27

personality is not at all of a piece with the penetrating satires of her dances. "I meet lots of my audiences during my tours, after performances," she says, "and they look me over and up and down and I can see them expecting me to sound like Dorothy Parker, at least. One of them looks me over and says, sorrowfully, "Gee, Miss Kitchell, you're not a bit funny off the stage." What do they expect, Charlie Chaplin?"

As a prime example of the way in which Miss Kitchell's art comes to her aid in an emergency, she recalls the performance at which she was doing a barefoot dance a la Duncan and had the bad luck to get a splinter in her big toe. After a few excruciating movements, she made up her mind that she could not possibly finish the dance with a splinter in her toe—one of them would have to go, she or the splinter. So she sat down on the stage and went seriously about extracting the splinter. The homely little operation convulsed the audience, which believed it to be part of the scenario of the dance. After a successful extraction, she arose and paddled her way comfortably through the remainder of her dance. When the program was over, a visitor backstage gushed over the splinter incident.

"I'll thank somebody for some iodine," remarked Iva sharply, "that was a nasty splinter I got in my toe."

"You mean," gaped the visitor, "it wasn't part of your dance?"

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Iva Kitchell is a tiny girl, a mere five feet, one inch high, but her energy and drive are out of all proportion to her size and weight. She designs and makes her own quite elaborate costumes, which are no small part of the success of her programs. Her arrangements are far more difficult technically than they need be to drive home the comedy effect.

Her extra-curricular talents include baking, at which she is a fine old hand. In fact, she baked a cake the day of her New York debut concert, as unique and certainly a more productive way of working off opening night jitters as anything ever heard of.

In private life she is married to an artist who has made many canvasses of his elfin wife. But she is also very much of an artist herself, as evidenced in her color selections for costumes, with the difference that her canvass is her dance.

All her dances are born fully clothed, so to speak, as she finds her ideas do not start with choreography alone, but that the finished costume will start off a trend of choreographic ideas, impossible to execute without the finished costume.

She explained,

"Just as you can't compose a dance without thinking in terms of rhythm and music, so you can't really get the feel of it unless you know what your costume is going to be and can work in it."

She confesses that part of her love of costume design and sewing comes from the intense interest she takes in fabrics.

"Texture and weight in cloth are a kind of choreography in themselves," she says feelingly. "Color is not the only important thing. Color is influenced by texture. Can you dance a genuine peasant in heavy brocaded cloth? Not really. Can you dance the Puritan spirit in chiffon without underdrawers? I think not. And doesn't the feel of velvet or satin have a very special effect on the senses? Does it not subtly affect the character of your movement? I think it does. Stage lighting can do much to hide faulty material but a dancer knows and feels if the texture is not right. She or he alone knows it and it affects the dancing seriously."

A typical Kitchell audience shows what it thinks of Iva Kitchell. (Youngstown, Ohio)

She recalls, with high glee, the modern dancer who once told her,

"I think a costume should be functional. It should fit the body."

To say nothing of the dance, which was, by implication, purely frivolous and not to be taken into consideration.

Iva Kitchell says it is possible to bring out whatever is pertinent in characterization by correct accent, which implies correct accent in costuming.

"Because," she says, "no one is exactly like anyone else on earth."

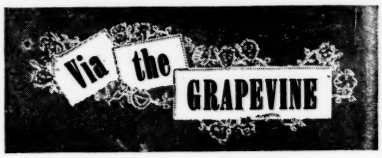
And that goes double for Iva.

Charles Weidman - Dancer for America

continued

fourteen years, is sufficiently close to New York City to make it readily accessible to visiting teachers and dancing companies. And it should be a welcome refuge for the many young student-dancers who every day push open the big red doors of the Studio Theatre in downtown New York to study with Mr Weidman and his assistants

And there are other plans still further away in the future. Mr. Weidman so enjoyed choreographing the Thurber Fables that he is thinking of collaborating on an all-Thurber show. Mr. Thurber himself hasn't heard of this one yet, but he'll certainly agree that nowhere could he find a more understanding protagonist than in Charles Weidman, who brings to the stage the same tender wit that Mr Thurber realizes on paper . . . and who helps us all to laugh at ourselves.



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Balanchine have completed a ballet entitled *Intermission*, described as a ballet within a ballet, which depicts a love affair which takes place during the *entre acte* of a performance. It will be staged for Ballet Society this Fall . . . A recent interview with **Eliabeth Duncan**, sister of **Isadora**, which appeared in the New York Herald Tribune, has it that Miss Duncan pays no attention to politics, but lives only according to the needs of the times. ? Miss D. has sailed for France to attend a National Dance Congress which took place on the 20th anniversary of Isadora's death. Duncan brothers **Augustin** and **Raymond** are noted in the interview as one, **Augustin**, living in **Long Island City**, and two, **Raymond** living at the **Waldorf-Astoria**, where he keeps busy at hand printing and weaving. **"Give us the simple life every time!"** said the New Yorker in quoting the Trib story.

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HIGHLIGHTS of the Dance Section Meeting held April 21, 1948, at the National Convention of the AAHPER, at Kansas City, Mo.

Jane Fox, national secretary of the Dance Section of the **AAHPER** reports as follows:

230 dance teachers and students from all sections of the country registered at the pre-convention meeting held in the Municipal Auditorium, arranged by **Victoria Schmidt** of **Harris Teachers College.** The A.M. session consisted of a lesson on the use of percussion music in dance taught by **Helen Gregory, U. of Oklahoma**, and a lesson in Mexican and S. American dances by **Gertrude Mooney, U. of Miami.** The P.M. session followed with Modern Dance taught by **Eleanor Lauer, Actors Company, Chicago** and Square and Round Dances, led by **Helen Dunbar** of **Normandy H. S., St. Louis.** These were followed by demonstrations of compositions based on folk approach by a group of 35 girls from **Normandy High,** directed by Mrs. **Elizabeth Schneider.** In conclusion, students from **Texas College for Women, Denton, Texas,** directed by **Anne Schley Dugan,** presented compositions based on rhythmic approach.

The Dance Section Meeting on Wednesday was in the form of a panel discussion, participated in by Dr. **J. B. Nash** of N. Y. University, **Hermine Sauthoff**, Board of Education, Madison, Wis., **Alma Hawkins** of George Williams College, Chicago, and **Elsa Schneider** of the U. S. Office of Education. On Thursday, a demonstration by Grade 1, 7 Oaks School, Kansas City, Mo., emphasized the use of recorded accompaniment in dance, and Dr. **Juana de Laban** of the University of Michigan lectured on the *Dance in Painting and Sculpture.*

In conclusion, the Legislative Board of the Dance Section discussed plans for making

the Section of greater service in the growth of dance in education.

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CAMPUS and CLASSROOM

The last session has been an active one for the dance department of **Bennett Junior College,** at Millbrook, N. Y., under the direction of **Carmen Rooker. Charles Weidman** visited Bennett and taught a master class; Miss Rooker and the dance majors staged a recital in March, and on a field trip to New York City in February, students visited and took classes with **Hanya Holm, Valerie Bettis, Alexander Gavrilov** and **Fransziska Boas.** In May the Dance Department collaborated with the Drama Department in staging the Theatre Guild's adaptation of Moliere's *The School for Husbands* . . . The culmination of a fruitful year at **Montclair State Teachers College** under the direction of **Mary Jane Hungerford, Ph. D.** was a recital topped off by a *chef d'oeuvre* (the choreography of Dr. Hungerford) entitled *The Lonesome Train,* a ballet, the theme of which was the funeral cortege of Abraham Lincoln on its way from Washington to New York City in 1865. This work will probably be re-staged by Dr. Hungerford for concert in 1948-49, for the **Choreographers Workshop** . . . **Juana de Laban,** head of the Dance Division of **Michigan State University,** reports varied and intense activity in that corner. The ballet and modern dance clubs of the college appeared in their annual recitals on May 10th under the direction of Dr. de Laban. Miss de Laban has also lectured before the Federated Women's Clubs on "Dance as One of the Major Arts" and has recently returned from Kansas City, Mo., where she demonstrated new methods of dance composition at the convention of the **AAHPER** with a group of students from the **Missouri State Teachers College.** At **Michigan** University, Miss de Laban has staged and done the choreography for the opera *Dido and Aeneas* and on May 12-13 collaborated in the staging of a program for the Renaissance Club of the University with the aid of the Music Department . . . **Gertrude Lippincott,** contributing editor of DANCE Magazine, and nationally known concert dancer, teacher and lecturer, will represent dance at the Annual Arts Forum of **Louisiana State University** at Baton Rouge, La., from June 10-20. Miss Lippincott will present a program of dances and will teach master classes in modern dance technique and composition.

In July Miss Lippincott will be in residence at **Colorado State College,** where she will present a solo-concert on July 19th, with two *premieres, Deirdre of the Sorrows* with music by Henry Cowel and *Suite* to the music of Casella. On July 29, she will stage a dance-demonstration with the students of the dance division . . . The dance section of the women's division of the **Ohio Physical Education and Recreation Association** sponsored a Dance Workshop at **Bowling Green State University** in Ohio early this year, an enthusiastically received and most unusual venture. It was attended by some 188 students from 17 colleges. The purpose of the Workshop was to stimulate dance groups in Ohio colleges to more prolific production of an interest in dance. The idea for the meeting came at the college conference held in Oberlin last Fall and an invitation was extended by **Evelyn Lockman** to the visiting delegations to attend the meeting and workshop, which was ultimately consummated this Spring. Miss **Margaret H'Doubler,** head of dance work at the **University of Wisconsin,** and a pioneer in the field of dance education, was a guest of the College at this conference. Other visitors were **Dr. Juana de Laban,** of the U. of Michigan, **Eleanor Mellert** of Kent State University, **Augusta Harris** and **Jane Brent** of Michigan State Normal, **Kay Genett** of Antioch College and numerous other educators.

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Thanks to the wandering feet and itching thumb of our own **DANCE Magazine** photographer, **EARL LEAF,** he and publisher **A. S. Barnes** have come up with a zestful account of E. L.'s Caribbean odyssey entitled **"Isles of Rhythm"** which ought to go down in literary annals as the equivalent of a 4-alarm fire, a 3-ring circus and a good dog fight thrown in for good measure. **Earl Leaf** happens to be not only one of the more gifted photographers of our day but also he brings to his book, as to his periodic articles, the same pristine freshness of outlook, almost naivete, the zest for living, the appreciation of rhythm, good eating, good living, good music, good-looking girls and not least, sex. This outlook of the eternally youthful adventurer with pen and camera makes "Isles of Rhythm" more than an excellent handbook for dancers and teachers in the trade; it makes it a frankly, joyously sublimated experience in travel and adventure.

Mr. Leaf covered the islands of **Cuba, Jamaica, Trinidad, Haiti, the Virgins** and other lesser islands. The photographic record of dances, all in action, are sensational stuff, more than a few of them obtained at cost of actual danger to himself. In some places in the interiors of Haiti and Jamaica he nearly got blown to bits, stabbed, burned and otherwise mutilated. Nevertheless the record of camera and pen affords a rich record of dances for those interested in ethnic dances. Chapter headings like *'Beginning the Beguine', 'Haitian Halftones', 'Tornado in Trinidad'* are typical of the tone of the book. Captions on pictures are fresh and unashamed: 'Daisy is in a sort of trance when she dances'; 'Raped by the wraith of the god' (!); 'An initiate is suddenly seized; she leaps into the fire and sits while the hot embers crackle' etc, etc.

Mr. Leaf has met and refers in his book to the best known dancers and dance personalities in the islands, of whom there is no dearth.

The book "Isles of Rhythm" published by A. S. Barnes at $5.00 is obtainable at any book dealer.

*

The Cecchetti technique is illustrated and interpreted in a smart little booklet entitled "Prelude to the Dance" published by a school and organization which calls itself **Cecchetti Technique,** at Pasadena, Cal. Write DANCE Magazine for details.

*

SUMMER SCHOOL NEWS

A special brush-up summer session in fundamental technics for dance teachers will be offered at the **Central Branch of the YWCA,** 610 Lexington Avenue, New York City, during July in ballet, modern and tap. Instructors in the health education department of the central branch **"Y"** will teach. They are **Martha Mellincoff, Nancy Lang** and **Diana Schubart** . . . **Hanya Holm** returns for her 8th consecutive summer to **Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colo.** She will be assisted by **Alwin Nikolais, Oliver Kostock** and **Glen Tetley** from New York and **Gregory MacDougall** of Colorado Springs. Miss Holm will participate in the production of the annual Fine Arts conference on August 6 and 7 and will finish the course with a performance, including a demonstration of students work . . . The **Fred Astaire** school celebrated its first anniversary last month. **Charles Casanave,** executive vice-president, observed the event by announcing the opening of the 26th branch of the school in **Atlanta, Ga.** The Astaire school and its teaching staff has been successfully demonstrating the Astaire manner in some of New York's better night clubs. The staff puts on a great show every Thursday evening at the **Martinique,** headed by **Charles Columbus, Mario Martinez** and **Olga Gomez** . . . The faculty of the **Shurman**

please turn to page 45

Earl Leaf

"Raped by the Wraith of the God" says the florid caption on this picture in Earl Leaf's exuberant and colorful new book "Isles of Rhythm". This Haitian damsel feels no pain from the flame which has seared her feet. She is in the transports of Ecstasy. See review herein for details.

***Dr. Hungerford* indicates the potential educational values of the screen**

To the right: Group patterns and intensity of line and movement make the screen choreography of Jack Cole for the ballets from Columbia's "Down to Earth" (with Rita Hayworth) cinedance on a high expressional level.

In "Living In A Big Way" Gene Kelly utilizes the dramatic and comic potential of a prop (a statue, in this case) to colour and highten the effect of his one-man ballet, choreographed by himself to show off his powerful technique and mimetic talent.

M. G. M.

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM SCREEN DANCING

by MARY JANE HUNGERFORD, Ph. D.

. . . so and so". It is not always clear what each person credited has actually contributed, and without knowing this how can the most diligent and experienced observer ever hope to know what to expect?

Sometimes the dance director given screen credit has simply located and hired a folk dance group or an exhibition ballroom team and acted as intermediary between them and the cameramen and picture director during the shooting. There is nothing to indicate whether the dance form is traditional, the invention of a performer, or what.

In other instances the same credit, that of dance director, may be used for the person who created the entire choreography. Furthermore, the dances themselves may be in the ballet idiom such as those in "The Unfinished Dance" (M.G.M., 1947) which gives David Lichine credit as dance director; or in the folk idiom such as the pseudo-Russian dances which the same dance director "created" for "Song of Russia" (M.G M., 1943).

Some films credit the performer only, as in the case of big names who may or may not have been responsible for the creation of their own material. The audience is often simply not told who did the choreography. This is the case with Gene Kelly's dances in *Living in a Big Way* (M.G.M., 1947).

In *Carnival in Costa Rica* (20th Century-Fox, 1947), Leonide Massine is given screen credit for the choreography, but how many of the millions who see this film will recognize him when he appears unexplained and unannounced as Vera Ellen's partner for one of the so-called "folk" dances? And why in the name of common sense confuse (or should the word be deceive?) the public further by claiming in the dialogue that the wedding dance is "authentic"? Anyone acquainted with the ballets *Gaite Parisienne* and *Capriccio Espagnole* will wonder why portions of these "authentic" Costa Rican folk dances seem so familiar.

As we have said, names count. Until recently dancers who contributed specialty numbers but had no acting role were almost never credited. Today sometimes a well-known performer or team like Devi Dja or Veloz and Yolanda are given screen credit for dancing alone.

LENGTH AND STYLE

To proceed to the second question, the number of dance sequences and their length can be checked by anyone who will take the trouble to provide himself with a watch with a second hand and a luminous dial, plus paper and pencil. It is not so easy to identify the style. This technique can be learned with experience, slowly. Reading and outside study speed up the process.

J. Arthur Rank Organization

"I Know Where I'm Going", an English film of recent vintage, set in the Scottish countryside, brought an unusually good presentation of Scottish group dances (a variety) to the screen.

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM SCREEN DANCING

continued

Cleo Nordi is listed as the choreographer for the gypsy dance sequences from this Eagle-Lion film, "Caravan". The costumes and props indicate the gypsies of eastern Europe, but the story insists they are Spanish, 19th century.

Eagle-Lion Films

Most laymen can distinguish ballet from ballroom dancing. For recognizing the finer divisions of dancing, some background or coaching is probably needed, especially if the mongrels are to be singled out from pure styles. The distinction between "cinedance" and "incidental" dances used in motion pictures was the subject of the article, "*Must Screen Dances be Incidental?*" which appeared in the **June, 1947** issue of **DANCE Magazine.** Since the bulk of dance footage is still and will doubtless continue for some time to be of the "incidental" variety, what are the main categories into which they fall, and the subdivisions under each?

The four main types are: ethnic, social, theatrical and expressional. By *ethnic* is meant the authentic, traditional forms, both social and artistic, performed either by professionals or amateurs, which are characteristic of a particular cultural group. Social dancing, generally performed by amateurs for the fun of it, includes not only current styles such as fox-trot, slow waltz, rumba and samba, but the "period" forms such as minuet, and polka, which achieved a certain universality as well.

Professional forms are either *theatrical* or *expressional*, and it is not always easy to distinguish between them. Often they use similar costumes, music and even movements. The difference lies in the subtle matter of purpose. Theatrical dances aim at spectacle, which will hold the attention, rather than at communication of some profound meaning. They are designed to please the senses. Their ingredients are movement, rhythm, and color, compounded with speed, variety and technical virtuosity. Tap, toe, acrobatic, adagio, character, musical comedy and exhibition ballroom dancing are the kinds that usually fall into the theatrical category. Theatrical (e.g. "impressionistic" or "hopped-up") versions of ethnic material should probably come under this classification also.

Expressional dances aim primarily at communication, and include chiefly modern and ballet styles today. Clearly there can be period forms of both theatrical and expressional dancing, as well as ethnic and social. Many dance sequences found in motion pictures these days defy classification because they fall exactly on the border line between expressional and theatrical. The purpose of the choreographer is not always apparent in the final product. Many of Gene Kelly's dances are cases in point. They may have a tap base, but they definitely convey meaning, ranging all the way from a vague mood to very specific ideas.

BASIC CRITERIA

Frequent viewing of motion pictures containing dance sequences gradually brings into focus qualitative standards which apply to each of the four major style categories: ethnic, social, theatrical and expressional dancing. They are:

1. Naturalness
2. Motivation
3. Continuity
4. Visibility
5. Synchronization
6. Skill of Performer(s)
7. Quality of Presentation

Naturalness

In applying the criterion of naturalness, one asks: "Does the dance look like what it is supposed to be?" To illustrate, contemporary ballroom styles are normally improvised. A jitterbug sequence may be more exciting if "staged" by a dance director. One that is, however, probably won't be convincingly natural.

Motivation

Motivation is closely related to naturalness. This criterion demands that there be real justification for including each dance sequence. The best motivation also involves some explanation by way of the dialogue and/or action which precedes the dancing.

It is logical for dancers to perform in a night club scene, and for laymen to fox-trot or waltz at a party. Ethnic dances belong in pictures set in foreign lands when the action involves an occasion ordinarily marked by dancing. The Scottish dances in *I Know Where I'm Going* (Rank, 1945) are well motivated, as are the Spanish dances in *Caravan* (Eagle-Lion, 1947). The period ballroom dancing in *Great Expectations* (Rank, 1947) is another example of adequate motivation.

Continuity

Quite as vital to quality in a dance sequence is *continuity*. "Is enough of the form shown without interruption to fulfill the purpose for which the dance is included?" A brief glimpse may be sufficient to establish the style and mood of a current ballroom dance. A period form, on the other hand, does not make much sense unless the complete pattern is shown in the traditional order. The continuity of an expressional dance obviously cannot be interrupted without sacrificing both its artistic integrity and the clarity of its meaning.

Visibility

The dance must be photographed from the best possible angles in order to achieve a reasonable standard of *visibility*. Perfect ballroom dances, for example, are best shot from a distance to delineate shifting floor patterns and groupings. If only a part of the dancer's anatomy is shown there should be a good reason. In general the whole dancer should be visible, or the whole group when several dancers are used. A change of angle should occur only at the end of a movement phrase. Furthermore, it should be unobtrusive and serve a definite purpose. Changing angles arbitrarily or for the sake of mere variety is one of the most common faults in theatrical dance sequences in American pictures.

Synchronization

Whether or not the dancers move exactly with the music which accompanies their performance is more a technical than an artistic matter. Yet even though the highest skill is routine in regard to most production details. it is incredible how frequently the music and movement are not in perfect unison. Failure to meet the criterion of synchronization can generally be put down to simple carelessness or penny pinching.

Skill of Performer(s)

This criterion needs no explanation. One needs merely to ask: "Is each performer competent?" Casting is perhaps the most important single element influencing the quality of screen dancing. No matter what the style, talent is available. Thus there is little excuse for anything less than virtuosity of performance, except, of course, where the context is such that mediocrity would be more natural.

Quality of the Presentation

This last of the general criteria is rarely violated in the better theatres. Poor presen-

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tation, however, is more widespread than may be supposed. The most common offenses are poorly arranged seats, distracting lights in the auditorium and sound volume either too high or too low. Inadequate ventilation, temperature control and failure of projection equipment are by no means rare.

Authenticity

The tendency to depart from accurate reproduction of period dance forms in all four categories is another too common weakness of American films. *Authenticity* in ethnic dances as well as period forms is a social and artistic responsibility. Just as a production is morally obligated to deal honestly with characters of a particular nationality, so must the backgrounds, including dances, be accurate. In other words, ethnic, social and period dances should be shown on the screen *exactly* as they might have been done by the people of the *country* in which the photoplay is set, for precisely the sort of *occasion* shown, on the *date* indicated.

Theatrical Dancing

The standards which apply to theatrical dancing on the screen, other than the seven listed are those which apply to stage dancing. Chief among the desirable qualities is *novelty*. Theatrical dancing must be entertaining above all, and that requires a new idea, an original skill, a unique personality.

Expressional Dancing

The same thing is true of expressional dancing and borderline types. There seem to be three additional matters affecting the quality of both these categories and that of cinedances as well: *plot development, appropriateness of the medium* and *effectiveness of the form.*

Plot Development

This is really our first basic criterion, *motivation,* slightly extended. Whereas social, ethnic and period dances are generally included as atmosphere, to indicate a place or time, a social or personal characteristic, theatrical dances are motivated by plots involving the entertainment business—clubs, stage, radio, motion pictures and television. Expressional dances should be an essential part of the dramatic development.

In the best show business pictures, dance sequences are included only where they are more or less inevitable, not dragged in by the heels to give the film production value. Unfortunately, few productions achieve a high standard in this respect. But expressional dances and hybrids that are somewhere between expressional and theatrical must actually develop, never interrupt the plot. Like *cinedances,* they must be so convincingly motivated as to seem absolutely essential and of themselves must carry the story forward.

In order to meet this criterion the single motivation much over-used in the past is the *dream.* There is at present an encouraging trend in the direction of freer and more varied motivation, however. Visualization of a fairy story is used in *Anchors Aweigh* (M G M., 1945). Free fantasy is found in *Down to Earth* (Columbia, 1947) and in *On Approval* (English Films, 1945).

Appropriateness of the Medium

In addition to being necessary and contributing to the progress of the story, a good expressional dance must have a subject appro-

Columbia Pictures

Purely incidental dances on the screen, inserted for decorative values, are illustrated by one of the best teams ever to have danced in this medium. Rita Hayworth and Fred Astaire in Columbia's "You Were Never Lovelier".

priate to the dance medium. Not all possible concepts can be expressed through rhythmic movement of the human body. If an idea or emotion can be portrayed more effectively through music or other sounds, through a montage of machines, building, landscapes, people or a combination of these, or through dialogue or colloquial action, then why should they be danced? A subject that is appropriate to dance expression may involve both the visual and auditory channels of perception, but the visual should carry the chief burden.

Effectiveness of the Form

Expressional dancing and *cinedances* must finally be judged with respect to form. When the form arises out of the logic of the subject matter, the expression is most effective. No feats of virtuosity are arbitrarily injected. Each movement, each rhythmic pattern, each design in space, each camera angle and linkage technique will be demanded by the concept which the dance director is trying to put across. Furthermore, each is related to the others and all are related to the whole motion picture.

Effectiveness of the form of a dance for the concert stage involve the number of dancers, the times and places for their appearances and disappearances, the total lengths, amount of reiteration, variety, etc. It includes accompaniment, costumes, decor and lighting. On the screen all these things are involved plus the camera setting, transitional devices, lens type, photographic speed and the whole repertoire of cinematic tricks.

Function of Criticism

Finally we come to the role of the critic. The qualified professional can detect faulty synchronization, distinguish "impressionistic" ethnic dances from "authentic" ones, and recognize anachronisms in period forms. He will be certain to examine each sequence for its naturalness and motivation. He will point out better and poorer choices of camera angle and transition. strong and weak casting, adequate and inadequate handling of credits. He will learn something of the background of both dancers and dance directors and make occasional comparisons.

Above all, the film dance critic will identify the dance style in each sequence, point out innovations and revivals and make generalizations concerning trends from time to time. In other words he will interpret the work and personalities of dancers and dance directors to the public and at the same time interpret the public response to the artists.

So far there are few dance critics who have concerned themselves to any extent with motion pictures and few film critics who are qualified to utilize all the above criteria or to cover dance with any thoroughness. Furthermore, space limitations often prevent detailed coverage of dance in reviews of photoplays in which it is not featured.

Nevertheless, if dance teachers both in public schools and private studios make the most of their opportunities, a crop of film dance critics may eventually be developed. They, through more competent evaluation, can lead both laymen and dancers to a deeper and broader appreciation of film dancing. This, in turn, may then create a demand for better products from Hollywood and the foreign film capitals.

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Fanny Cerito in the Shadow Dance (Pas de L'Ombre) from the ballet "Ondine" by Jules Perrot.

AN INTRODUCTION TO

BALLET HISTORY

Ballet from its birth in the Italian Renaissance to the contemporary scene in Twelve Parts

by A. E. TWYSDEN

CHAPTER EIGHT
THE DEVELOPMENT OF BALLET 1840 - 1880

NOT SINCE the time of Camargo and Salle had ballet known such rivalry as that of Taglioni and Elssler, but though the public certainly took sides in the matter it seems to have kept its head on the whole, and allowed that each dancer shone supreme in her own sphere.

There was indeed little resemblance in appearance or style—Taglioni was neither beautiful nor well proportioned, and though her over-long neck, arms, and legs may be counted good faults in a dancer, the same cannot be said for her extremely rounded and sloping shoulders. When, at the age of thirty-three, she visited the Ballet School in St. Petersburg the pupils beheld an ugly elderly woman whose yellowish face was covered with wrinkles. They told her so in Russian in such honeyed tones and with such sweet smiles that she, poor thing, not understanding, thought she was being complimented and said "Thank you children" in French!

Elssler, on the other hand, was a beautifully built and very attractive woman. Only her fair skin and the shape of her face proclaimed her Austrian nationality, for her black eyes and hair could well have belonged to a Spaniard.

Elssler, having "nothing to seek in the heavens where Taglioni soared", "showered every sparkling fascination round her like a sorceress". She became "Spanish for Spaniards, Russian for Russians, and Neapolitan when dancing the Tarantella". She excelled in dramatic miming and in her "taquette", the tips of her toes seeming to pierce holes in the stage, so sharp were her steps, but she had none of her rival's elevation.

Extreme grace of movement was common to both as was their dislike of appearing with first class male dancers. Jules Perrot, called "Perrot, l'Airien" and the "male Taglioni" because of his elevation, was a case in point. From 1830 to 1835 he appeared with Taglioni at the Paris Opera in several of her best-known ballets and always with great success. "They moved as though swayed by the same breath of wind, they sank and rose together as if moved by a

common impulse. Perrot bounded about the Sylphide while she leant on the clouds; they rose in the most melodious harmony".

Carlotta Grisi, third great ballerina of the Romantic era, might never have achieved fame had Perrot not left the Paris opera and accepted engagements in other countries, for it was in Naples that he first noticed her and offered to take charge of her future career. Grisi was born in 1819 near Mantua, the youngest of four sisters, two of whom became opera singers, following in the footsteps of their cousin, the famous Giulia Grisi. Carlotta also had a voice but she preferred dancing, and so was entered at the school of La Scala in Milan when seven years old. Here she made rapid progress, becoming in a few years something of a child prodigy. As a darling of the public she was overworked, and as a result became ill and was obliged to give up dancing. Efforts were made to persuade her to sing, but she refused, and as soon as she recovered she joined an Italian touring company where she remained for some years. In 1836 she was seen by Perrot, but as she had been for some years without any training she was far from holding a distinguished position in the ballet. Perrot, however, decided that here was latent talent, which he proceeded most energetically to develop. When he considered his pupil to be sufficiently advanced he procured an engagement for them both in London. This was followed by visits to Austria, Germany, and Italy, while Perrot, in addition to continuing Grisi's training, began to work as a choreographer, producing several small ballets and one important work, "Le Lutin". In 1840 Perrot and Grisi danced in Paris in "La Zingara"—Grisi singing as well as dancing—but the principal success appears to have been Perrot's. Theophile Gautier, critic and author, wrote "Perrot's legs did it all"; "Perrot displays a perfect grace, purity, and lightness; it is visible music, and if the comparison be permitted, his legs sing very agreeably to the

A ballet of the romantic period, by Coralli, called "La Peri", a work which offset the talents of Carlotta Grisi and Lucien Petipa.

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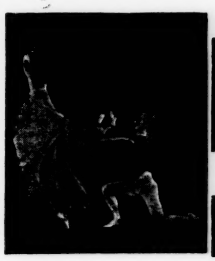

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eye." Of Grisi he writes "She knows how to dance, a rare quality; she has fire, but not enough originality; her dancing lacks distinction".

But the next year Gautier himself suggested an idea for a ballet, having been impressed by a legend read in a volume of Heine. Vernoy de St. Georges, a well-known librettist, collaborated with Gautier on the story, Adolph Adam agreed to compose special music, while Ceceri designed the scenery, and thus was born the ballet "Giselle", chef d'oeuvre of the Romantic Period. The choreography was officially ascribed to Jean Coralli, Maitre de Ballet at the Opera, but it was an open secret that Perrot had arranged all Grisi's dances himself. "Giselle" proved to be the most successful ballet ever produced at the Opera, and Grisi rose to fame in a single night.

Grisi remained at the Opera until 1849 with annual holidays during which she appeared in London where Perrot was then working. In this way she created the principal roles in many of his best ballets, including "Esmeralda". First produced in Paris, as was the well known "La Peri" of Corralli, second only in popularity to "Giselle". It was as "La Peri" that Grisi made her famous leap from the clouds to her lover's arms, which so intrigued an English balletomane that he went to each performance waiting to see her misjudge the distance and break her neck!

In 1845 Perrot staged his famous "Pas de Quatre" for Taglioni, Grisi, Cerrito, and Grahn. Elssler was originally to have been included, but this being found impossible Grahn was substituted.

Lucille Grahn, born in Copenhagen, was Danish, and received her training in the Royal School in Copenhagen, then directed by Bournonville. She was beautiful but cold, and in style resembled Taglioni who also possessed the Scandinavian temparament. Her greatest role was that of Eoline, in Perrot's ballet of that name, where the Dryads danced between transparent trees to give an illusion of the supernatural.

Fanny Cerrito, born in 1821, was an Italian whose style somewhat approached that of Elssler. She was the first to dance Perrot's "Ondine", that charming ballet in which the naiad becomes a mortal and acquires a shadow which she tries to catch. Cerrito married A. St. Leon, later Maitre de Ballet at the Paris Opera, where he created many ballets for her.

In 1848 Perrot went to St. Petersburg, where Grisi joined him in 1850 to dance in his old and new ballets. She left three years later and retired in 1854. Perrot remained until 1858 when he returned to Paris, and in 1860 retired also. Perrot was the greatest male dancer since Auguste Vestris, and the choreographer par excellence of the Romantic Movement, for which he possessed both supernatural and dramatic feeling. With his retirement following so soon after those of Taglioni and Grisi, Romanticism quickly declined. Andre Levinson in his life of Taglioni, writing of her share in the then new vogue for romanticism, savs "The traditional dance had been an exercise pleasant to witness; henceforth it expressed the things of the soul. The ballet was an entertainment; it became a mystery".

continued from page 13

Oedipus and Medea legends. For a while we thought she would hold the scale in balance. The opening passages of the chorus (danced by her earnest little company consisting of **Jacqueline Hairston, Sara Hamill, Muriel Mannings, Marian Shapiro,** and **Anneliese Widman**) had an angular, driving beauty and just the right amount of dignity to overcome the World's Fair-looking setting designed by Ibram Iassow and the Trowbridge-inspired costumes of John Boyt.

Sidling, wheedling, and weaving intricate little floor patterns, *Ismene* (**Lillian Wexler**) was emphatically the most interesting and best deveoped character in the little tragedy.

For the role of *Antigone* (Marie Marchowsky) we cannot say the same. It was stilted, overly dramatic, and in its desire to communicate through non-motion and theatricalized gesture, was markedly derivative of Martha Graham's *Sorceress, Jocasta,* and *One Who Seeks* solos.

Odyssey, her other long work, (and I *do* mean long) followed the emotional development of a sensitive person from childhood to the threshold of maturity.

Miss Marchowsky's only positive attempt at wit in all of *Odyssey* was the ironic little *Formal Encounter* in which the protagonist (Miss M.) learned rote and rule from two spinsterish types portrayed by **Jacqueline Hairston** and **Muriel Mannings.**

Marian Shapiro as Destiny got the worst end of the bargain in the final "Major Encounter" of *Odyssey.* Clad in an unbecoming black mop-wig, she had to perch atop a ladder-like prop and play a grim game of jump-rope with Miss Marchowsky. It was indeed an unfortunate sequence.

In her *Seed in the Wind, Image of Obsession,* and *Ebb Tide* Miss Marchowsky was far more direct and produced three works of well fused visual and emotional appeal. *Seed in the Wind,* a little experiment in pure group movement, was warm and fluent and made intelligent use of its Chavez score.

Her solo, *Ebb Tide,* skillfully combined the non-human aspects of a piece of driftwood shifting in a dying tide and the very human mood of loneliness and dejection.

Image of Obsession, the only composition from the previous concert, certainly deserved its repetition. It is a terrifying, malevolent study in consuming mother-love that holds the child virtually crucified after her one touching attempt to escape through contact with another child. A melodious, full-bodied score by Herbert Haufrecht, well constructed dance-acting by Miss **Marchowsky** as the mother, **Lillian Wexler** as her child, and **Marian Shapiro** as another child, and some of the most expressive, clear-cut movement Miss Marchowsky has ever made, give it an abiding first place among her compositions. The study has a kind of spareness that she would do well to strive for in her other dances.

David Shapiro was the accompanist, assisted by Herbert Tichman (clarinet) and Elden Bailey (percussion).

Doris Hering.

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Use of the Middle Body *continued from page 23*

should be a highly individual one and should not be imposed upon other dancers as if it were the one and only technic in modern dance.

But I can hear you saying as you read this, "Are you trying to tell me that because of the differences between modern dance and ballet, there can be no interaction between the two? Why can't Spanish dancers experiment and use their technic in a new way? Perhaps it will work after all? The ballet lives by absorbing new ideas into its system. Why can't modern dance do the same?" I answer by saying it is true that ballet takes in many new notions. But it absorbs them within its own framework. Modern dance, however, is a much freer idiom than ballet. When it is subject to diversions in form and structure, it is sometimes not as selective as it should be. There is, and can be, little tradition and no code against which to test new ideas with which it comes in contact. This fact accounts for some of the unfortunate results which crop up from time to time in modern dance, bewildering audiences and confusing critics.

We might be able to combine the best features of the virtuoso technic and those of the expressional medium in a purely superficial way. Such a combination, however, is not theoretically sound. Practically the results of such a union are frequently disastrous. I grant that there have been a few exceptions such as the Jooss Ballet. But like all exceptions, they are far and few between. As a rule, a meeting place between the technic of the virtuoso dance and that of modern, expressional dance becomes a kind of artistic "never never land".

Season in Review (***Severin***) *continued from page 14*

have been changed—by the case of Lizzie Borden. You know—"Lizzie Borden took an axe, And gave her mother forty whacks, And when she saw what she had done, She gave her father forty-one."

It might better be considered a drastic variation of the stepmother theme, wherein Prince Charming (John Kriza, a Pastor) fails to save Cinderella (Alicia Alonso—or Nora Kaye—"The Accused") from stepmother's clutches (Muriel Bentley), which eventually prove so irritating that Cinderella is driven to murder. In still another sense, it is Miss De Mille's version of Tudor's *Undertow*—three years later.

One notable thing she has done, though. She has attempted to lighten the unremitting gloom by breaking the plot's main thread with sprightly (if not inventive) ensemble dances, whose style is appropriately more balletic than the modern-dance pantomime of the dramatic portions. That she hasn't completely succeeded in integrating the two is no good reason why she shouldn't keep trying. The problem is all-important. It is hardly credible, though remotely possible, that anyone's existence, even poor Lizzie's, could be as totally devoid of happy moments as our more doleful choreographers would like us to believe.

It's a funny thing, but Morton Gould's score reflects some of the dancing's chief defects. Neither exhibits the slightest trace of genuine artistic integrity and both are very slick—by virtue of which they both appear shallow and specious. The music, moreover, is composed of an almost embarrassing hodge-podge of Copland, Stravinsky, Menotti *et al.* Far superior in every respect is the singular setting of Oliver Smith, along with Miles White's costumes. Constructivist in approach, it principally consists of a skeletal structure in the middle of the stage that can be taken apart or moved by the dancers to suit the action—without distracting you unduly by the workings of the machinery.

There are, however, two pleasant things to report about Antony Tudor's first ballet in three long years, *Shadow of the Wind*. For all its faults, it has what *Fall River Legend* so conspicuously lacks, a degree of artistic integrity, and that I respect. It also indicates that Tudor has abandoned, for the time being anyway, the psychological type of ballet—and that I like. Unfortunately, he has not gone nearly far enough. The single underlying theme of all of his serious works is the frustration of love, plus such corollary emotions as grief, anger, and subdued longing. His newest work re-echoes these emotions, for it is based on several Chinese poems of despair written over a thousand years ago by a Mr. Li Po. Their German version Gustav Mahler set to music that takes an hour to play and is sung by a tenor and contralto, and it is this music which Tudor has chosen for his choreography.

Both, it seems to me, suffer from a characteristic Romantic restriction of feeling to a single, monotonous mood, and that one depressing. The music, which sounds rather lovely to begin with, degenerates finally into a long-winded whine, while the choreography seems hardly less repetitious and boring—

An episode from "Shadow of the Wind": 'My Lord Summons Me' sketched for DANCE by Ray Wisniewski.

Sketch of Nana Gollner in the episode 'Poem of the Guitar' from "Shadow of the Wind" (by Wisniewski)

with the exception of a few charming dances, particularly one on *pointes* for Nana Gollner, in the section entitled "Poem of the Guitar".

Despite their similarities, the music, songs, and dancing have not been thoroughly integrated. Although *Dark Elegies* (also to Mahler) used a method more musical, the dances at times seemed to serve merely as background for the music. The reverse is often true of *Shadow of the Wind;* here Mr. Tudor has at times employed the more literary approach so common to his work, so that the music seems to serve as merely background for the dancing.

This mistake has led him into still another and more costly error. To his usual blend of ballet and modern dance he has added (not mixed) a thin veneer of Oriental movement, with uneasy posturings by the dancers resembling the figures in a Chinese or Japanese print. The effect is rather phoney, though occasionally quite comical, as, for instance, when you see Youskevitch (in the first section only) doing strenuous ballet turns and trying to look Far Eastern—tight-lipped, grim of face, and visibly peeved as he flaps his arms in futile attempts to extricate his hands from the gosh-darned folds of his sleeves. In addition, there is a section for Alonso and Kriza entitled "The Abandoned Wife," another for Hugh Laing, having a conversation not with Nora Kaye but a winepot and a fierce papier-mâché bird, and two other inconsequential sections which I haven't mentioned and do not plan to. Mr. Tudor's Oriental scheme of things has been faithfully carried out by Jo Mielziner's conventional, monochromatic setting and his conventional, multicolored costumes. Maybe it all will improve with age.

There hasn't been space to do much more than mention the leading dancers in the ballets discussed, so let me explain at this point that in all such cases the dancing was fine. Without any question, I should add, individual honors for the season were won by Alicia Alonso, for her indefatigability, her marvelous technique, her remarkable versatility. Her *Swan Queen*, for instance, is now second only to that of Danilova—and that, I think, is going some.

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the torso, while Miss Seckler's whole body lifted and folded toward the leg like a huge breath.

Miss Seckler carried this same exciting quality into her own original solo, "Unconquered" with an extremely helpful score by Ada Reif. The dance could be translated literally as a person fearing and then triumphing over some terrible political or social force, or figuratively as a triumph over fear. On either level it is at all times clear and logical and draws constantly and liberally upon Miss Seckler's tremendous resources as a dancer of dramatic power and technical range. Let us hope that her decision to break the choreographic ice will herald ambitious plans for the future.

Peter Hamilton also contributed three of his own solos during his brief tenure at the beginning of the series, and we were fortunate enough to catch his "Jesse James" once again. Big, brash, noisy, and splendidly danced, it remains a delightful piece of theatrical bombast.

Needless to say, the "James Thurber's Fables For Our Time", Mr. Weidman's Guggenheim Fellowship project, have been considerably reworked since their Jacob's "Little Red Riding Hood" episode has been replaced by the adorable "Courtship of Arthur and Al".

The four sketches present Mr. Weidman in four versions of the masculine ne'er-do-well and very succinctly prove that all good dreamers come to a happy end, and all thorough-going materialists meet a bitter one. Thus, with gentleness and charm he succeeds in getting to the very core of Thurber's philosophy and at the same time presents a very astute commentary on a large segment of our contemporary life.

In "The Unicorn in the Garden" his portrayal of the husband "with a high heart because there was a unicorn in the garden" reminds us of the pen-portraits of Thurber himself—gentle, dreamy, whimsical, and a bit henpecked. And we couldn't help but feel a tingle of satisfaction when his shrewish wife (energetically and uninhibitedly characatured by Saida Gerrard) outsmarted herself and was carried off to the booby hatch.

The chipmonk husband in "The Shrike and the Chipmonks" made artistic patterns with his pretty, brightly colored acorns, while the wife was all for gathering as many as she could. Result: death for them both. But not before Mr. Weidman contributed one of the most delicious pantomime episodes in all his repertoire, and Betty Osgood as the wife once again proved her versatility as a comic dancer who spares herself not one whit in her realization of the nagging, bustling, greedy little female.

Mr. Weidman's Owl in "The Owl Who Was God" is a clever combination of bird-like gesture (the puffing cheeks, the blinking eyes, the shrugging shoulders) and human frailty. He reminds one of the cartoon versions of a pompous old Southern senator.

But on the whole, once the character has been established at the beginning of the fable, and once the animal costumes of the group have made their initial impression and been identified, interest lags. Because here again, Mr. Weidman is stymied by the present of his entire company on the stage and with little for them to do except march to their doom on the heels of the foolish old owl.

This same sparseness in group pattern appears to a degree in the playful section of "The Courtship of Arthur and Al". But it is not so noticeable because there are enough bright touches to offset it...touches like the lazy beaver, Al ("who never did a gnaw of work in his life") tenderly stroking the brown velvet tail of the Pretty Little Female (Betts Lee); or the Pretty Little Female (who has married the economically secure Arthur) hanging up a row of tiny beaver coats on her washline; or Al's feminine playmates tittering and plunging into their imaginary stream. Here is whimsy of the highest order.

Freda Miller's score is not only pleasant to listen to, but actually tuneful. And Jack Ferris's blasé, urbane, narrative style gives the whole set of fables just the right amount of sophistication, instead of the bedtime-story-quality that a more dramatic narration would have imparted.

The feminine contingent of Mr. Weidman's group consisted of Betty Osgood, Beatrice Seckler (guest artist), Saida Gerrard, Felisa Condé, Sharry Traver, Sherry Parker, Emily Frankel, Betts Lee, and Nadine Gae (guest). With the notable exception of Betty Osgood, Saida Gerrard, and Beatrice Seckler, they were all a little on the immature side and looked as though they had learned their pantomime lesson by rote from teacher Weidman, without infusing it with any real personal quality. But time should rectify this. And in the meanwhile, they do perform with freshness and sincerity, and occasionally with the energy they should strive for at all times.

Of the men (Carl Morris, Spencer Teakle, Marc Breaux, and Nicholas Vanoff), Marc Breaux shows the most promise. He is by turns eager, intense, and always responsive. He was particularly outstanding in the group portions of "A House Divided", projecting them with feeling. Stylistically he seems to be heading toward the level of Beatrice Seckler and Saida Gerrard, which is all to the good, for he may eventually fill (in his own way, of course) the very real gap left by Peter Hamilton, who with Nadine Gae, appeared as guest in the first three days of the run.

Carl Morris was called upon to assume many of Mr. Hamilton's vacated roles, and in addition, to continue in some of his own. Thus he was required to do virtuoso dancing and pantomime, as well. In both he displayed a kind of dependable competence that marked him as a handy fellow to have around—if not a particularly exciting one.

And speaking of handy fellows to have around, let us hope that Mr. Weidman and his company will be around for many and longer seasons to come, so that all the skeptics who say, "Dancers, bah! You can never understand what they're driving at", will have a chance to eat their words.

via the grapevine

continued from page 29

School in Carnegie Hall has featured the talents of **Nina Popova, Helen Komarova, Maria Tallchief** and **Anna Scarpova** (Mme. Youskevitch) . . . The **Fokine School's** summer session will feature a roster of well-known dancers on its faculty, each to teach for a two-week period. The early July session opens with **Leon Danielian** . . . The **Gramercy Dance School for Children** held its annual Spring demonstration on May 16 at the Educational Alliance in New York City, demonstrating the basic work of the school, creative modern dancing. **Sarah Bartell,** director of the school, **Dora Dubsky** and **Harriet Morin** directed . . . The **Jack Stanly** school is harboring and training the sensational **Williams Brothers** and **Kay Thompson,** an act which **Bob Alton,** Hollywood and Broadway choreographer sent to Mr. **Stanly** for special training . . . The **Martha Graham Dance School** gives a summer course lasting from June 14 to July 10 in technique and composition with a faculty composed of **Martha Graham, Lois Horst, Erick Hawkins, Yuriko, Ethel Winter** and **Nina Fonaroff** . . . **Antony Tudor** will give a special 3 weeks course in ballet and dance choreography at the **Ballet Arts School** in Carnegie Hall starting August 9th, upon his return from London. He is going to have his students work on a composition and compose a ballet in class during the run of the course.

*

The **Steffi Nossen Teen Age Dance Workshop,** the **Junior Dance Workshop** and the **Steffi Nossen School** appeared in and were the sponsors of *four* recitals this Spring, given at Scarsdale, Larchmont, Manaroneck and Pelham, N. Y. Program highlights of these recitals were *Manhattan Tower, Children's Suite, Game of Chess* and *Gateway to Learning,* among others . . . The students of the **Jan Veen school** appeared at Jordan Hall, Boston, on May 25 in a recital composed of dances such as *Gayne Suite, Witch Dance, Hora Staccata, Spasmodic Space.* The recital was held for the benefit of the Dance Scholarship Fund of the Boston Conservatory of Music . . . The pupils of Mme. **Bronislava Mordkin** appeared in recital on May 14 in New York City at the Master Institute of United Arts. Talented soloists who appeared were **Martha Mathes, Viola Verhovitz, Evelyn Goldstein, Arlene Isaacs, Mary Kiernan, Ginger Runes, Elise Katzman** and **Sybil Weiss.** They were augmented by a well assorted corps de ballet in a program consisting of the dances *Rhapsody, Swiss, Toy Top, Silver Polka, Russian Dance,* and others.

*

Folk and Square dancing for beginners and advanced will be held every Saturday at 9-12 P.M. and every Sunday at 8-11 P.M. in Studio 61, Carnegie Hall, all summer except the July 4th weekend. Guest callers and instructors include the well known and popular **Dick Kraus, Paul Hunt** and others.

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M. G. M.

Those bums are no bums; they are Judy Garland and Fred Astaire in M. G. M.'s forthcoming "EASTER PARADE". Mr. Astaire came out of retirement especially for this picture to brighten the cinema once more with his unique talent.

Summer School Calendar

This calendar is a continuation of listings begun in the MAY issue:

NEW YORK CITY

Dunham School of Dance — June, July and August
Edna Lucile Baum — July 26-31
Ethnologic Dance Center — July 19-August 13
(La Meri)
Fokine School — July and August
Hanya Holm — June 3-23
Huapala — July 6-August 21
José Limon — June 1-30
School of Dance Repertory — July and August
(Arthur Mahoney and Thalia Mara)
Shurman School — July and August
Jack Stanly — June, July and August
Weekly sessions all summer;
11th Annual Summer Normal School
Charles Weidman — June-August

*

NEW YORK STATE

Fransziska Boas — July 18-August 29
Bolton Landing on Lake George, N. Y.

*

CALIFORNIA

University of California — June 21-July 31
Berkeley, Cal. (Caryl Cuddeback)

*

COLORADO

Lloyd Shaw (Western dancing) — July 14-29
Colorado Springs, Colo.

*

ILLINOIS

Gladys Hight — August 2-13
Chicago, Ill.

*

IOWA

State University of Iowa — June 8-August 4
Iowa City, Iowa

*

MICHIGAN

University of Michigan — June 14-August 28
Ann Arbor, Michigan (Juana de Laban)

NEW MEXICO

Elizabeth Waters — July 1-August 13
Contemporary Dance School, Santa Fe, N. M.

*

WISCONSIN

University of Wisconsin — June 25-August 20
Madison, Wis. (Louise Kloepper, etc.)

CONVENTIONS and NORMAL SCHOOLS

American Society of Teachers of Dancing
Week of August 7th
Hotel Astor, New York City

Calendar of Events

(Los Angeles)

June 5, 12, 19, 26 **LESTER HORTON** and Company
at the Dance Theater,
Los Angeles.

*

(New York City)

June 5 Demonstration (Adult work) at the Dance Center of the 92nd Street YW-YMHA at 8:40 P.M.
6 Demonstration (Children's Work) at the Dance Center of the 92nd Street YW-YMHA at 3:30 P.M.
13 **Seenie Rothier** at the Barbizon-Plaza Theater
20 East-West Ass'n.-Caribbean Backgrounds at the 92nd St. YW-YMHA
23 8 Prize Winning Ethnic Dance Films sponsored by **Dunham** School of Dance at the 92nd St. YW-YMHA 8.30 P.M.
25 **Daniel Lloyd** and Company at the Harlem Boys Club

See JULY issue of DANCE for review of concerts of Pearl Primus, Cheyenne Mountain Dancers, Choreographers Workshop and Bella Reine.

Notes on the 70th Birthday of the
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
TEACHERS OF DANCING

The **American Society of Teachers of Dancing** celebrates its 70th birthday this summer, in common with New York City's Golden Jubilee. The Annual Conference of the Society will be held as usual at the **Hotel Astor** from **August 9-13.**

A limited number of non-member teachers will be allowed to take the conference work.

The Executive Committee, comprised of teachers from many parts of the country, met at the Hotel Astor in March to outline the summer program and to provide for necessary changes in the Constitution.

The President of the American Society, Mrs. **Helen Wicks Reid** sailed early in June for a two month holiday in England. She will attend the Dance Congress in London and sessions of the Imperial Society and will visit a former well known ballroom teacher in Belfast, Ireland, Mrs. **Dorothy Norman Cropper Marshall.** Mrs. Reid will return in time to preside at the Conference in August.

The present Executive Committee of the ASTD is composed of
Helen Wicks Reid, President
Mary B. Wucherer, 1st Vice-President
Louise B. Kelly, 2nd Vice-President
Catherine McVeigh, Secretary and Treasurer
Ruth I. Byrne, Elsa Heilich Kempe and Sophie W. Reed.

Committee chairwomen are:
Mary B. Wucherer, Faculty and Convention
Elinor Fry Phillips, Convention Membership
Norma Allewelt Lindsay, Publicity
Virginia Patterson, Banquet
Eugenia Dozier, Educational

*

D.M.A. 1948 SUMMER
SCHOOL and CONVENTION

The **Shoreham Hotel** in **Washington, D. C.** will house the anticipated giant convention and normal school of the **Dancing Masters of America** this summer. The faculty of the Normal School consists of such prominent names as **Aubrey Hitchins,** in ballet, **Gertrude Edwards Jory,** in Cecchetti technic, **Helyn R. Flanagan,** in graded tap, **James Rozanas,** in acrobatic, **Marjorie Mazzia,** in modern, **Cecelia Fleischer** in baby dances. **Katharine O'Gorman** will teach *Use and Knowledge of the Body.* Fundamentals in baton twirling will be given by **Ruth Valiquette. Marie Miller** has been appointed Principal of the Normal School and **Vida Godwin** will again perform as Dean of Women.

The **Convention** opens Sunday, **August 1** and ends **August 7th,** likewise at the Shore-

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ham. The faculty consists of: **Maria Yurieva** and **Michael Nicholoff,** ballet, **Helyn R. Flanagan** and **Johnny Sager,** tap, **Walter Camryn,** character dances, **Johnny Plaza,** acrobatics, **Elaine Arndt,** production routines, **Lillafrances Viles,** baby dances, **Dolores Magwood,** baton twirling, **Alberto Galo,** exhibition ballroom, **Phil Osterhouse,** business management.

The excellent ballroom faculty consists of **Albert Butler, Hazel Boone, Gladys Bowen, Clement Browne, Oscar Duryea, John Michael Hurley, Don Le Blanc, Christine MacAnanny, Kay Stone** and **Florence S. Young.**

In addition to classes, interesting forums, lectures and parties are scheduled for Normal School and Convention.

*

LONDON

On April 13 Sadler's Wells Ballet revived their full-length production of *Le Lac des Cygnes* with **Margot Fonteyn** and **Michael Somes** in the leading roles. The ballet has obviously been carefully reconsidered and worked over and countless tiny but important emendations have been made. The production is still marred by Leslie Hurry's unsuitable decor but Fonteyn has never given a more completely assured or a lovelier performance. She now emerges as an almost ideal exponent of this most romantic of all classical ballets. Somes is a fine dancer, sympathetic mime and sure partner; he is an excellent foil for Fonteyn as Prince Siegfried. Sadler's Wells were due to revive **Ninette de Valois's** *JOB* on May 20 at a gala performance attended by the Queen. The ballet has an entirely new decor by John Piper and is no longer based upon the designs of William Blake. The first Covent Garden performance will be danced by **Robert Helpmann** as *Satan.* **Anton Dolin,** who created the role in 1931, will appear in it during June.

The Marquis de Cuevas's **Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo** is due to open at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, on August 2 for a four-week season. The company, which has been so successful on the Continent, will be headed by **Rosella Hightower** and **Andre Eglevsky.**

Metropolitan Ballet gives its first London season at the Scala Theatre in June. The repertoire now includes **John Taras'** successful ballet *Designs with Strings* and a revival of Fokine's Dances from *Prince Igor.*

*

At one of their recent Sunday performances, the New London Film Society showed a selection of dance films assembled by A. V. Coton, covering the period 1909 to 1947 and embracing Ballroom, Ballet and Tap dancing as well as abstract and cartoon films. Most hilarious item was a pas de deux danced by Geltzer and Tikhomiroff in 1913 which illustrated only too clearly the absurdities against which Fokine revolted. Pre-eminent among modern dance films was the *pas de deux* from *Swan Lake* danced by **Galina Ulanova** and **Sergeyev.** The perfection of Ulanova's dancing astonishes at every showing of this film.

*

Markova and **Dolin** are due to give their first performance at Covent Garden on June 7 . . . **Sally Gilmour** of the Rambert Ballet, who got engaged to Dr. Allan Wynne in Australia during the company's tour there, will come back to England with her fiance . . . **Robert Helpmann** has participated in the very high-brow B.B.C. lecture series, with two of his own on the work of the choreographer in ballet . . . **Errol Addison,** who danced with the Diaghileff company, is now dancing the Harlequin role in *Carnaval* for the International Ballet Company . . . **Kurt Jooss** has left for Chile where he will join **Rudolf Pescht,** who used to be a leading dancer with the Jooss Ballet before the war . . . **David Paltenghi** has turned choreographer and has arranged the dances for the film, *The Bad Lord Byron,* and is shortly to start on *Sarabande for Dead Lovers.*

*

During the return visit of **Ram Gopal's** successful Indian Ballet to London's Saville Theatre, **Vaslav Nijinsky** attended a performance—his first visit to a London theatre for 33 years. He sat in a box, accompanied by his wife, and at the end of the performance the audience spontaneously applauded him. The Nijinskys are at present living quietly at Egham, Surrey, but Madame Nijinsky speaks of plans for the foundation of an international theatre of the dance where all great artists of the ballet would perform, study and compose. "We think England is the ideal location for such an institution," Madame Nijinsky is quoted as saying. "My husband would advise on choreography and teaching."

On May 24, International Ballet presented at Kilburn's giant Gaumont State cinema their reconstruction of the full-length Petipa ballet *The Sleeping Princess.* The version is described as "original' and is an attempt to recreate the Maryinsky production rather than to emulate Diaghilev's 1921 revival. Tutus have been dropped to knee-length (the dancers inevitably dub them "new look") and the fairy tale divertissements restored to the last act.

West London's Rudolph Steiner Theatre has recently witnessed several dance recitals, notably two performances by **Yoma Sasburgh,** a Dutch dancer trained under **Ruth Tobi** who subsequently gained a scholarship to the Jooss-Leeder School of Dance at Dartington Hall and worked with the Ballets Jooss. Yoma creates all her own choreography and much of the music for her dances is specially composed by her husband, Clifton Parker. Her repertoire ranges from simple folk dances to symbolic studies of *Lucifer* and *Judith* but she is temperamentally best suited to gayer subjects. **June Fryer** and **Jacqueline Robinson** also gave three performances at the Rudolph Steiner following their recent successful engagements in Dublin and Paris.

Biggest surprise at the R.A.D. recently was when one of their Gold Medal scholars was invited to play county cricket for Middlesex this summer. The boy, a New Zealander, proved to be an excellent cricketer and is expected to combine regular "nets" with daily "barres" and go on tour with Middlesex when Sadler's Wells are on holiday. Seriously, the R.A.D. Production Club considers itself well established now that Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet has acquired John Cranko's *Children's Corner* which was first produced for the Club last year. The ballet is a tiny trifle but has charm and shows promise.

*

SAN FRANCISCO

Markova and **Dolin** skipped through town too quickly even to do a pas de deux. They flew here to fill engagements in Hawaii, Manila and Hong Kong...**Ann Halprin** and **Welland Lathrop** gave a concert of modern dance at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor. Miss Halprin, who composes her own dances, is most forceful...Varieties of '48 with **Lili St. Cyr** and **Paul Valentine** is on view. One of her numbers is *Salome,* which one of our local critics described as 'salami'. **Grace and Nicco,** comedy dance team, keep their audiences in stitches with their sophisticated nonsense...

*

LISBON

Bailados Verde Gaio will be completely overhauled after May, when the present opera season at the Sao Carlos Theatre will be at an end. The group is providing the corps de ballet. Display of temperament from various sides have resulted in French ballerina Andrée Degas, who had been booked as 'prima ballerina assoluta', to dance only in the opera *Hamlet* and to solo in *Coppelia.* Italian ballerina Franca Maraldi, also booked as 'prima ballerina assoluta' will do only a few of the operas, but into the breach have quickly stepped some of the best elements of the Verde Gaio group—and so—Tininha Moreira, Isabel Santa Rosa, and Helena Miranda will dance other solos.

Italian maitre de ballet and choreographer Guglielmo Morresi and his wife, Spanish dancer Carmen de la Vega, have left the

Group of teachers from the Fred Astaire school appear at the club La Martinique regularly in the floor show. In center foreground: Louise Holden and Charles Columbus, rehearsing for the show.

Verde Gaio group and are going to Spain, Italy and Argentina to fulfill recently signed contracts.

Self-taught folk dancer Francis (Francisco Graca) back in his native Portugal after a tour of Brazil, will go back to his former place as choreographer and dancer for the folk ballets that Verde Gaio will produce next season. German-born Ruth Walden will be his partner. As artistic director and choreographer for 'modern' ballet and leading dancers they have booked Swedish Ivo Cramer (2nd prize-winner at the Dance Festival in Copenhagen, 1947).

This engagement means that in the future the accent will be on 'modern' ballet.

Fernando Ferro and Paulo Fereira are going to write the story of the Bailados Verde Gaio in its eight years of existence. It will be published in the fall of 1948.

Swedish ballet is fashionable just now in the Iberian peninsula. After Cimarro Ballets, now back in Barcelona, the Lalla Cassel Swedish ballets have arrived in Portugal and are touring the country. They have a repertory of small ballets, which they produce either at the end of a film show or of a light revue to which they add a certain artistic tone.

Ballerinas Anna Maria Mascolo and Isabel Affonseca have appeared in recital at the Friends of Italy Hall, under the direction of poetess Oliva Guerra.

*

MEXICO CITY

Rainy and dry season in Mexico applies to entertainment as well as the weather, as we have pointed out before. For three months we have had nary a dancer to write about, and now, in the month of April we have a veritable shower of them.

Most important was a series of recitals at Bellas Artes by the exquisite **Mariemma,** who came to us from Madrid. Spanish dancing is always well received in Mexico because the people see it as a part of their own heritage. Native dancing as it has evolved in Mexico (that does not mean Indian ritual dancing which is an entirely different thing) is of course an outgrowth of the old Spanish dances, but modified by the admixture of Indian blood, by Indian music and by a certain regional individualism. Nevertheless the Spanish heritage is still here, so that good Spanish dancing—and there is nothing sorrier than poor Spanish dancing—can always set a spark to Mexican emotions. True Spanish dancing depends less on technical perfection than on that elusive "soul" or Latin fire that animates it. When you find both the technical perfection and the fire—then you have a great dancer. Mariemma has them both.

Unfortunately Mariemma was here for only four recitals, and about the time the public discovered how good she was, she was gone. Mediocre Spanish dancers cannot cause a ripple here—we have too many of them and it takes about four recitals before the public wakes up. Mariemma specializes in the regional dances of Spain and she has a sure knowledge of the folklore of her people. That accounts for the "fire". Then she has a lovely body and every movement is grace and life, and she has one of the most expressive pairs of hands we have ever seen.

Latest arrival is La Meri, who has her own school, the Ethnologic Dance Center, in New York. **La Meri** has been brought to Mexico by those three ex-G. I. impresarios who compose the American Theatre of Mexico. She opened last week at the private theatre of the Mexican-Northamerican Institute of Cultural Relations, to an audience of especially selected invited guests. She gave five recitals there, then went off for a tour of the republic. La Meri's repertoire includes dances from many lands—Java, India, Burma, Spain, China, Hawaii, Arabia, Japan, Ceylon, Africa, Cuba, Argentina and New Zealand. That covers a lot of territory, but La Meri has beautiful and authentic costumes for all of them, and her dances are all either authentic folk dances, or her own adaptation of folk customs. Here is another pair of extremely expressive hands, especially important in the eastern dances, and La Meri is an expert with them. She played to a very appreciative audience.

The ice carnival, "Holiday on Ice, 1948", opened in the huge outdoor Stadium the middle of April. President Alemán attended the opening and the big lush show is drawing record crowds—although having a time keeping the outdoor rink frozen in a spell of "unusual" warm weather. **Dorothy Goos** is the principal attraction with local critics.

In another month the Opera season will be upon us again, and already the management has announced the return of **Irene Hawthorne** as primera bailarina for the season. Irene was here last season, and gave us the local Opera's first good ballet. We hope she will have a better supporting troupe this year.

There is the usual rash of ordinary Mexican and Spanish dancers at the various small theatres and variety houses, but the Tivoli has been giving us a great deal of advance publicity about a wonderful Tahitian dancer, called **Tongolele,** who opened early in May. If she lives up to promise she is something special. Perhaps we can tell you more about her next month.

Also this month there have been two recitals of local dance schools, in Bellas Artes. The first was the two-year-old academy of **Gloria Albet,** who at least knows how to get her pupils on their toes. The second was a rather ambitious presentation of **Coppelia,** following the usual individual dances of the pupils of Maestro **Enrique Velezzi.** Mr. Velezzi has been teaching dancing in Mexico for fifteen years and most of his pupils make a living in local theatres and night clubs, but he differs from most of the local teachers in having a good professional sense. He has recently been appointed head of the departments of both Spanish and classical ballet at the National Academy of the Dance, but this recital was by his own private pupils. **Coppelia** was unusually good for an amateur group and we expect to see a few of the performers in professional ballet before too long. Especially deserving of a boost toward that goal are **Adelina Rodriguez, Graciela Obregon, Esperanza de Llano, Anita Rosenfeld** and **Alfonso de la Garza.** Mr. Velezzi who has himself danced since he was seven years old, studied in Chicago under AndreásPavley and Serge Oukrainsky.

P.F.R.

Fred Fehl

Ballet dancers sometimes find themselves in some very odd places. This one, on the rump of a very dejected horse, is taking instructions from choreographer Esther Junger (face turned away from camera) who is galloping down tanbark after the horse with instructions for the dances. This was taken at the dress rehearsal in Madison Square Garden. Miss Junger has arranged ballet spectacles for the second consecutive year for the Ringling Bros. Barnum and Bailey Circus.

The Pirate

A Film with Lively Dances by Gene Kelly and Bob Alton

THE M.G.M. horn of plenty is about to spout an abundantly gay and lively film, spiced with some dances by Robert Alton and Gene Kelly, who collaborated on the choreography to produce some purely period dances. The center of interest, as well as the principal dancer in "The Pirate" is the versatile Gene Kelly, who performs the role of Serafin, in the swaggering, flaunting, roistering manner of Douglas Fairbanks and D'Artagnan rolled into one, a roving actor with a roving eye, a nimble wit and a charmed life, to boot.

The *ipso facto* star of "The Pirate" is Judy Garland, who performs in a number called "Mack, the Black," done against a background of smoke and fire, a phantasmagoria of impressions purporting to depict what a young lady of the West Indies in the early 19th century imagines the "Pirate" is really like.

Gene Kelly dances a piece called "Nina" in which he displays his prowess as both lover and an acrobat, for the girls of the town to which he has come as an itinerant actor. In another called "Be a Clown" he is accompanied by the famous Berry Brothers, all three dressed as clowns, in an acrobatic, knock-about routine with overtures of 19th century music hall and 20th century technique.

The story is concerned with the romance of Serafin, the actor, who comes to a tiny Caribbean island, early in the 19th century, and is instrumental in averting the arranged marriage of Manuela (Judy Garland) to the mayor of the town (Walter Slezak). The Mayor is, in fact, the real pirate, one Macoco, who has grown fat on his loot and retired to the small island to enjoy his prosperity. If you think he enjoys it for long, see "The Pirate" and learn again and again and again that Crime Doesn't Pay.

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The New National Ballet in SWEDEN — illustrated.

From OKLAHOMA to MONTE CARLO — Lillian Moore interviews ballerina ROSELLA HIGHTOWER in Monte Carlo . . . .

The Booking Agent: Friend or Fiend — author George Leon opines that he is six of one and a half-dozen of the other . . . . .

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WRITE TO Leroy H. Thayer, Secy.-Treas., 1644 Connecticut Avenue, Dept. D. 648, Washington 9, D. C., for bulletin giving complete information about normal school, convention and membership